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BY ESTHER SINGLETON

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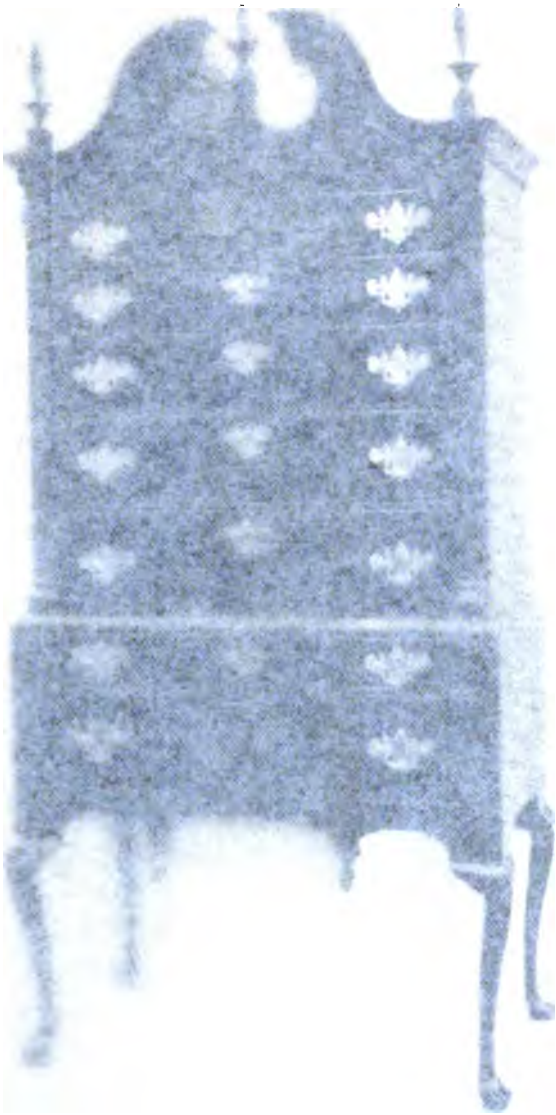


High Case of Drawers, Mahogany
with Brass Mounts
Metropolitan Museum

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FURNITURE

By ESTHER SINGLETON

Author of "French and English Furniture," "Dutch and Flemish Furniture," etc., etc.



NEW YORK
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FURNITURE

I

STYLES AND SCHOOLS

THE EGYPTIAN STYLE; THE GREEK STYLE; THE ROMAN STYLE; THE BYZANTINE STYLE; THE ROMANESQUE STYLE; THE GOTHIC STYLE; LOUIS XII. STYLE; HENRI II. STYLE; THE ENGLISH RENAISSANCE; THE FLEMISH RENAISSANCE; THE SPANISH RENAISSANCE; LOUIS XIII. STYLE; THE RUBENS STYLE; THE *GENRE AURICULAIRE;* THE JACOBEAN PERIOD; ORIENTAL INFLUENCES; LOUIS XIV. STYLE; REGENCY STYLE; THE *STYLE REFUGIÉ;* THE QUEEN ANNE STYLE; THE ANGLO-DUTCH STYLE; LOUIS XV. STYLE; THE CHIPPENDALE STYLE; LOUIS XVI. STYLE; THE ADAM STYLE; THE HEPPELWHITE STYLE; THOMAS SHEARER; THE SHERATON STYLE; THE DIRECTOIRE STYLE; THE EMPIRE STYLE; THE NINETEENTH CENTURY STYLES.

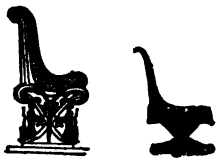
THE EGYPTIAN STYLE

THE Egyptian style had a great deal of influence on Greek and Etruscan Art. Though the household furniture of the Egyptians was somewhat limited, the cabinet-makers produced beautiful inlaid work at a very early period. Egypt was poor in timber, and therefore cedar and other woods were imported and ebony and ivory were procured from Ethiopia and Mesopotamia. Human and animal forms, as well as floral devices, were used for the decoration of furniture, which was adorned with brilliant color designs. The wood was sometimes gilded and sometimes inlaid with precious metals, stones and colored glass.

"For furniture, various woods were employed, ebony,

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acacia or sont, cedar, sycamore, and others of species not determined. Ivory, both of hippopotamus and elephant, was used for inlaying, as also were glass pastes; and specimens of marquetry are not uncommon. In the paintings in the tombs, gorgeous pictures and gilded furniture are depicted.



EGYPTIAN CHAIRS

For cushions and mattresses, linen cloth and colored stuffs, filled with feathers of the waterfowl, appear to have been used, while seats have plaited bottoms of linen cord or tanned and dyed leather thrown over them, and sometimes the skins of panthers served this purpose. For carpets they used mats of palm fibre, on which they often sat. On the whole, an Egyptian house was lightly furnished, and not encumbered with so many articles as are in use at the present day." [1]

The Greek Style

The Greek Style was of Asiatic origin, but soon freed itself from the early, stiff hieratic forms. The richness of Oriental color remained in the textiles and furniture; and Greek form and ornament formed the principal inspiration for many later styles. Wood was used for household furniture; and the surfaces of the luxurious objects were variously ornamented with designs of animal groups, mythological scenes and floral devices, carved, painted and gilded. The wooden furniture of the Greeks has all perished and only the bronze tables, tripods, chairs and beds remain.



GREEK CHAIRS
TABLES AND STOOLS

The characteristic motives of Greek ornament are the fret, zigzag, wave-scroll, *echinus* (called also the horse-

[1] Dr. Birch.

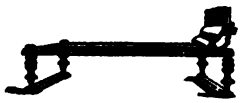
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chestnut, or egg-and-tongue), guilloche, patera (or rosette) and anthemion (or honeysuckle). The Greeks also used the sphynx, griffin, triton and chimæra in decoration; but these mythological animals occur far more frequently in Roman work.

Greek influence began to be felt in Rome in the Third Century B. C. Etruscan Art had dominated there up to that time.

The Roman Style

Roman furniture was exceedingly costly and decorative. Marble, gold, silver and bronze were used as well as woods. Furniture was enriched by damascened work and inlaid with ivory, metal and sometimes even precious stones. Like the Assyrians, Egyptians and Greeks, the Romans carved the arms and legs of chairs, tables and couches to represent the legs and feet of animals. Maple, beech, holly, olive, cedar, pine, ash and elm were the chosen woods, and cheaper woods were veneered with costly woods for the sake of the decorative effect. One of the luxuries of the day was a wood called *thyine*, a kind of aloe that grew in Africa, and which was valued for its beauty, hardness, sweet odor, and, not least, for the good luck it was supposed to bring. Thyine was used by the priests for incense, and the Arabs held it in such high estimation that they made the ceiling and floor of the famous Mosque of Cordova of this precious wood. Pliny speaks of the mania for this kind of wood, and says when husbands scolded their wives for their extravagance in pearls, the latter charged them with their extravagance for tables of thyine wood. Cicero had one of these tables that cost a million sesterces (about $45,000).



ROMAN COUCH OF BRONZE

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Furniture

The Byzantine Style

The style known as Byzantine is a development of the early classic Greek mixed with Roman and Oriental influences. It developed in Constantinople, the capital of the Eastern Empire. Rich furniture adorned the homes of the great. It is worth noting that the old custom of reclining at meals ceased and people sat on benches. Ivory entered largely in the decoration of furniture, and beautiful tapestries and cushions were plentiful. The most remarkable relic of the Byzantine period is the famous chair of St. Peter, which authorities agree is genuine. It is now preserved in St. Peter's Church in Rome, but is entirely covered with a bronze casing, made by Bernini in 1667 from bronze taken from the Pantheon. According to tradition this relic belonged to Senator Pudens, an early convert to Christianity, who gave to the Church his house in Rome over which now stands the Church of St. Pudenziana. The chair was given by Pudens to St. Peter, and it became the throne of the See. It is square, with solid front and arms. The square front is thirty-nine inches wide and thirty inches high, and is embellished with eighteen groups taken from the Gospels, beautifully carved in ivory and inlaid with pure gold. The chair itself is made of wood, overlaid with carved ivory and gold, and bound together with iron.



CHAIR OF ST. PETER

The Romanesque Style

The Romanesque (*style Roman*), which prevailed in Europe during the Dark Ages, stands between the Byzantine and the Gothic Style. Beginning in the Fifth Century, it

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dominated architecture and the Decorative Arts till the Twelfth Century. During this period and until the Renaissance, furniture was architectural in form and decoration. The panels were carved or painted with arcades of round arches, and the spaces were filled with saintly figures and monsters. Geometrical figures were also largely used in the ornamentation. The characteristic details of the marquetry of this style are the star, saw-tooth, checker, billet, overlapping lozenges, battlement mouldings and diamond points.

The Gothic Style

The furniture of the Middle Ages was constructed of solid oak, consisting of massive planks and wide panels left bare to be decorated with painting, stamped leather, or lightly cut ornaments. Gradually the carving developed and became more important in company with the changes of sculptured ornament in Gothic architecture. Under the luxurious Dukes of Burgundy, Flemish taste prevailed both in England and France during the Fifteenth Century. This taste was characterized by naturalism of form and face, expressive attitude and a tendency to satire and caricature.

"The complete development of Gothic architecture, and the pieces of furniture inspired by the same taste are divided into flamboyant Gothic arcades, and crowned by fine needle-shaped crockets and floriated croziers; their niches contain elegantly quaint figures and the panels with their bas-reliefs rival in perfection the retables (altar-pieces) and triptychs of intricate workmanship." [1]

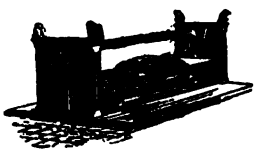
A glance at the carved furniture of this period shows that the motives of decoration consisted of human and animal figures, foliage and plate-tracery and bar-tracery. In the

[1] Jacquemart.

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Fifteenth Century the tracery was largely supplanted by the "linen-fold," which became exceedingly popular in Germany, France, Flanders and England. The panels of German work on Plate III. and Plate VII. show two elaborate examples of this motive which was banished by the Renaissance. A third example on Plate VIII. shows this design on a French credence or buffet of the same period.

During the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries the forms of furniture were few. Perhaps the most important was the chest, *huche,* or *bahut,* in which money, clothes, linen, tapestries and valuables were preserved and transported from place to place. Next came the bedstead; then the chair, for the master of the house; then the high-backed benches and stools (*escabeaux*); then the credence (*buffet*); and, finally, the *dressoir*, with its shelves on which cloths were laid and plate displayed.



CARVED OAK SEAT WITH MOVABLE BACK. FIFTEENTH CENTURY

Furniture changed very little during the next two centuries. More luxurious fabrics were brought home by the Crusaders; and the cushions, carpets and hangings became richer and more plentiful. Carving progressed and the style of marquetry known as *alla certosa* was introduced from Italy.

A great number of little pieces of furniture, such as caskets, coffers, *échiquiers* (chessboards) incrusted or *marqueté* with ivory appear in the inventories of the Fourteenth Century, generally under the name of *l'œuvre de Damas.* Undoubtedly the Crusaders brought them from the East, and the inlay frequently consists of verses from the Koran (*lettres sarzines*). In Europe, and especially in France, these wares were soon imitated.

Italian furniture during the Fifteenth Century was nota-

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ble for its bright color; painting and marquetry were its chief characteristics. During the Renaissance furniture borrowed its forms and strong reliefs from sculpture, and for the flat forms, which showed off the purity of profile and harmony of colors, forms of furniture were substituted that looked well with imposing architecture. Each piece of furniture presented veritable bas-reliefs often much contorted, whose magnificent and sumptuous effect was increased still more by being ornamented with gold or covered entirely with gold.

Leather was extensively used during the Middle Ages for furnishing: it was hung upon the walls and beds, spread upon the floors, and was used to cover the seats and backs of chairs, coffers, and all kinds of boxes. In 1420, we hear of a piece of Cordovan called *cuirace vermeil* "to put on the floor around a bed," and also a "chamber hanging" of "silvered *cuir de mouton,* ornamented with red figures." Charles V. of France had "fifteen *cuirs d'Arragon* to put on the floor in summer," and the Duke of Burgundy's inventory of 1427 mentions "leathers to spread in the chamber in summer time."

The floral and other patterns and figures were gilded and stood out from grounds of bright colors. Though the use of gilded leather (*cuirs dorés*) did not become general until the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries, the art of gilding, silvering, painting and goffering leather had long been known. Cordova was making beautiful gilded leathers in the Eleventh Century. The most beautiful leathers came from Spain, where they were called *Guadameciles,* from Ghadames in Africa from which town the Moors carried the industry to Cordova.

From Cordova the manufacture spread into Portugal, Italy, France and Brabant. The great centres for gilded leathers in the Middle Ages were Cordova, Lisbon, Lille,

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Brussels, Liège, Antwerp, Mechlin and Venice. The Portuguese leathers were made of sheepskin, and became very famous. These were imitated by the Flemings who used calfskin with less success. The subjects of decoration of early leathers are taken from sacred or mythological stories. The details of the faces, ornaments, costumes, arms, etc., are stamped by hand work and finished with a brush; and the background is ornamented by guilloches (twisted bands) in gold and color, applied by means of a goffering iron.

Beautiful Cordovan leather covers the chair on Plate XIX.

Little study has yet been given to the arts in Spain during the Middle Ages; and although wood-carving was in a very flourishing condition, being largely used in the decoration of the Mauresque buildings, yet examples of Spanish furniture of the period are extremely rare. It has been suggested that this may be explained by the Oriental influence over the greater part of the peninsula which reduced furniture to the mere necessaries, — chests, cushions, carpets and hangings. The Gothic work produced by the native craftsmen belongs principally to what might be called the international style of the Fifteenth Century. It is believed that there must still exist in Spain a good deal of carved furniture of that period which in construction and ornamentation resembles the work of the French and Flemish experts of that day.

"In the Fifteenth Century, the bedchamber is thus represented: the curtained bedstead, with corniced tester, displayed its costly coverlets; on one side was the master's chair, then the devotional picture or small domestic altar attached to the wall. The *dressoir* and other small pieces of furniture were to be seen ranged round the apartment and often in front of the immense fireplace was a high-backed seat where the inmates came to seek warmth. This arrangement which is seen in miniatures and tapestries taken from various sources, proves the uniformity of habits in the different

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classes of society. Here we find personages whose dress and elegance denote their high position; here again are plain citizens surrounded by their serving-men, and by a number of objects which allow us to judge that the apartment is at once the bedchamber, reception-room, and refectory of the family.

"If we enter the study of the statesman or of the writer, we find the high-chair, or *faldistoire,* with its monumental back, the revolving-desk called a 'wheel,' used to keep a certain number of books within reach, lecterns and various other sorts of desks for writing." [1]



PRIE-DIEU CHAIR, FIFTEENTH CENTURY

Gothic furniture dating before 1400 A. D. is exceedingly scarce: even the most famous museums think themselves fortunate if they possess one or two examples. Plate I. represents a celebrated chest of Lorraine workmanship, now in the Cluny Museum. It was made about 1300 A. D., and is regarded as one of the finest specimens of the art of the period. Over the front are carved twelve fully armed warriors in Gothic niches, the spaces between being occupied by grotesque faces and chimerical animals. The panels on the ends of the chest are also richly carved. The left one contains an oak tree with fantastic birds on its branches and on the ground. The right panel is carved with a body of cavalry on the march. The back of the chest is ornamented with four groups of workmen, warriors, porters, and falconers. On the lid are twelve medallions separated by chimerical animals: they are framed with foliage and animals of the chase picked out with painting. The principal medallions are filled with love scenes, men fighting and tilting, musicians and jongleurs, all carved with great spirit and humor.

Another famous Gothic chest, also in the Cluny Museum,

[1] Jacquemart.

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is reproduced on Plate II. The carving on the front represents a tournament scene of the first half of the Fifteenth Century, and is interesting as a record of the costume and armor of the period.

Germany is richer in Gothic furniture that has survived than either England or France. Several museums and castles have fine collections of Mediæval woodwork. The cupboard, or wardrobe, shown on Plate VII. is an excellent example of the late Gothic art. It is in the Nuremberg Museum. The figures of Peter and Paul in the top panels are in the style of Peter Visscher, the great Nuremberg sculptor (1460–1529).

The splendid carved bench or settle (Plate III.) in the same museum belongs to the same period. It is a fine type of the seat of honor that was found in every great baronial hall. When complete, it had a step, or foot-board, a daïs, or canopy, and cushions.

Another treasure of the Nuremberg Museum is the half-headed Gothic bed (Plate V.) with its panels of flamboyant plate and thistle design.

The richly carved Gothic press, or *Schrank* (Plate VI.), also in the Nuremberg Museum, came from Sterzing in the Tyrol: it was made about 1500 A. D. This type of wardrobe was common all over Germany in wealthy homes where the mistress used it for fine linen and plate; and in the sacristy, where it was used for storing ecclesiastical paraphernalia.

A very ordinary form of Gothic bed is one in the Munich Museum, reproduced on Plate IV. As a rule, it was fixed to the paneling of the room and carved in the same style.

"The real *certosino* originated in Venice and was an Oriental imitation; from the Thirteenth Century to the end of the Fourteenth the incrustations were in black and white wood, sometimes enriched with ivory; it was not until later that the number of colored woods was increased,

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PLATE II

Tilting Chest. Fifteenth Century

Cluny Museum

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and that ivory was used with its natural tint or stained green; sometimes small metallic plaques were added to the work. These primitive labors are almost always of small dimensions, consisting of boxes and jewel-caskets of rather hasty make. When the inlaid work is applied to furniture it is at first with a certain reserve; a chest (*bahut*) belonging to M. Henri Cernuschi is simply ornamented with fillets round its circumference, and on each side by a circle formed of small bone lozenges incrusted in the brown wood. This chest dates from the Fifteenth Century. Later on come the *cassoni*, the cabinets, the folding-tables, the seats shaped in the form of an X, and even elegantly carved high-backed chairs in which colored woods combined with ivory form geometrical designs of great richness; often in circular medallions, or in the middle of panels, a vase appears, whence issue flowered stems, which rise upwards, spreading out like a bouquet of fireworks. Nearly all the furniture in piqué *alla certosa* comes from Italy; but some may be met with, among the most striking of which have been made in Portugal; these are generally to be recognized by the plentiful appliances of pierced copper that ornament them. The cabinets have complicated corners and keyholes which the gilding renders peculiarly brilliant.



SPANISH CHAIR, WOOD AND IVORY INLAID, ABOUT 1500

"The word *tarsia*, or *intarsia*, was used in Italy to designate all incrustations or marquetry either in wood or any other material on a background of wood, but, strictly speaking, it should only be employed when the pictures represent landscapes, still life, architecture or other scenes, while the word *certosino* is used to describe marquetry composed of very minute fragments put together in geometrical patterns.

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"Taken in its literal sense, *certosino* describes work made by the disciples of St. Bruno — the Carthusians — mosaic work of the most delicate description in bone, ivory, mother-of-pearl, metal, or woods chemically colored, and showing the greatest amount of patience though rarely in any save geometrical designs. Tarsia, on the other hand, rendered by means of chemically colored woods pictures which the mosaic-worker either copied or originated. The decorations of the armoires in the sacristy of the Duomo in Florence are evidently original with the artist who ornamented them. These mosaics were found to be very perishable: tarsia was costly and difficult to execute, and the atmospheric changes were very harmful. It was necessary to restore fine pieces frequently; so frequently, indeed, that little was left of the original ornamentation. Therefore at the end of the Fifteenth and beginning of the Sixteenth Century this style of decoration was supplanted by painting. The beautiful work in the sacristy of Santa Maria delle Grazie in Milan, attributed to Bernardino Luini, showed that painted panels were superior to those of marquetry. It was now but a step to those beautifully painted little caskets and coffers with delicate paintings on a gold background.

"Furniture was exquisitely painted during the Sixteenth Century. By 1550 tarsia-work had taken a subordinate place. Italian furniture of the first period of the Renaissance was conceived by painters and made by workmen who followed their designs. Very often they misunderstood the special purpose for which the special piece was intended. In this the French *huchier* was supreme: he never misunderstood the purpose for which any piece was intended — form and decoration had to be subordinate to the function and destination of every piece of furniture that he made." [1]

A beautiful example of inlaid work of the period ap-

[1] Molinier.

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PLATE III

Gothic Settle

Nuremberg Museum

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pears on Plate X., representing a bed that belonged to the Princess Palatine, Susanna, and to which the date 1530 is attributed by the authorities of the Munich Museum, where it is preserved. It is probably of Italian workmanship.

In the Sixteenth, as in the preceding century, the Italians were particularly fond of the Roman triumphal arch and sarcophagus, as forms for furniture. The Classic Orders were in great vogue, and the arabesque and candelabra-shaped pilasters, introduced so long ago into decoration, were renewed and made popular by Raphael. To the ancient style of marquetry, composed of little geometrically-cut cubes of natural wood, there succeeded a marquetry of colored woods arranged to form actual pictures with perspective. Some of the furniture was carved, and then painted, or gilded; but other furniture shows large surfaces that are decorated with beautiful oil paintings.

The Italian furniture was particularly *da pompa,* made for the adornment of long galleries, enriched with paintings, gildings, tapestries, velvets, damasks, brocades, cushions, curtains, mirrors and sumptuous *cassoni.* Beds, chairs, tables, cabinets, mirror and picture frames, standing candelabra, bellows, coffers, chests, seats and buffets (*credenza*), are of the most luxurious nature. Plate XI. shows a good example of an Italian chest of the period. To this period belonged the famous nuptial set in the Borgherini Palace, Florence.

When Salvi Borgherini's son, Pier Francesco, was betrothed to Margherita Acciajuoli, Salvi resolved to prepare for them a beautiful nuptial chamber decorated entirely by the first artists of the time. Baccio d'Agnolo carved all the ornaments of the doors and the bed and mantelpiece and made the superb furniture that consisted of high-backed chairs (*spalliere*), stools and seats (*sederi*), and coffers (*cassoni*), all of which were enriched with delicate carving.

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But this was not all: the entire room was decorated with panels painted by such artists as Andrea del Sarto, Francesco Granacci, Jacopo da Pontormo and Bacchiacca, the subject being the story of Joseph. The wedding is supposed to have taken place in 1523. The beautiful bridal chamber excited the greatest admiration.

During the eight months' siege of Florence in 1527, a furniture-dealer named Giovanbattista della Palla, employed by François I., King of France, to secure for him whatever art treasures he could find, appeared before the Signory and suggested that the pictures and furniture of the Borgherini chamber should be purchased and presented by the city of Florence to François I. Consent was given, and the wily furniture-dealer, knowing that Salvi Borgherini had recently died and that Pier Francesco was in Lucca, hurried to the Palace.

"Much to his surprise, however, he was confronted on the threshold of the bride-chamber by Margherita Acciajuoli herself, a valiant lady, worthy to be the wife and daughter of noble Florentine citizens, who at once assailed him with a torrent of violent reproaches. 'You, Giovanbattista?' she exclaimed, 'you! vile broker, paltry twopenny shopkeeper! *you* dare to come and seize the ornaments of gentlemen's rooms and spoil this city of its richest and noblest things, and all to embellish foreign countries and the homes of our enemies? I do not wonder at you, plebeian that you are, and enemy of your country, but I am surprised at the magistrates of this city who allow your abominable wickedness. This bed which you seek to satisfy your own greed of gain, however much you may endeavor to conceal your evil intentions under the cloak of duty, is my own marriage bed. It was in honor of my nuptials that my father-in-law, Salvi, prepared all this magnificent and royal furniture, dear to me both for the sake of his memory and for the love I bear

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PLATE IV

Gothic Bedstead

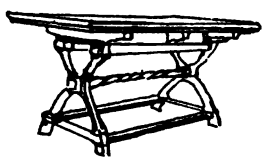
Munich Museum

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my husband, and which I intend to defend with the last drop of my blood. Get out of this house, then, with all your troop, Giovanbattista! Go and tell those who sent you that I will not suffer a single thing to be removed from this place; and if those who trust you, contemptible man, wish to send gifts to the King of France, let them go and spoil their own houses and the ornaments and beds of their own chambers! Go! and if ever you dare to show your face again in this house I will teach you, to your cost, the respect which the like of you owe to the houses of gentlemen.'"

Margherita Acciajuoli kept her treasures; but in the course of time they were dispersed. Andrea's and Pontormo's panels were preserved, and are now in the Pitti and Uffizi galleries. All the rest were lost.



GERMAN TABLE, ABOUT 1500

In the Sixteenth Century furniture more like that in use in our own day became more general; but much of it is often described as "camp furniture." Everything was made to take apart: the columns of the beds were jointed; the tables were slabs placed on trestles; the chairs folded up; and curtains were hung on poles with rings. Rugs, cushions and superb tapestries soon turned a temporary lodging into a luxurious and beautiful abode. Chests and *bahuts* were still of the greatest importance. Towards the end of this century, furniture became more abundant; and though much of it was "movable," much of it was made for its one permanent home.

Louis XII. Style

The dawn of the Renaissance in France is known as the Louis XII. Style. It was the transitional period following the Italian expedition of Charles VIII. in 1497. The furni-

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ture becomes Classic in form, and the antique column again finds its place in the decoration, but the pilaster is preferred on account of its flat face being so well adapted for the carved arabesques so characteristic of this period. The detail is principally floral, human and animal forms being unimportant and expressionless. The furniture of Louis XII. and François I. was not altogether derived from the Italian furniture. The style of the ornamentation was Italian; but its architecture remained purely French until the middle of the Sixteenth Century and, in some provinces, even later.

" The Renaissance of the Sixteenth Century is divided into two distinct periods, those of François I. and Henri II. The first is exuberant, bloated and prodigal. The second is more restrained, more linear, more geometrical, and more severe. The characteristic impression produced by the works of the Renaissance Style is that of vast wealth of varied fancy in the decorative motives and in the swarm of their details. Every piece of furniture is a whole world in which swarm real or fantastic beings mingled with garlands of flowers and fruits. It is the spectacle of a fat fecundity, better nourished than the style of the preceding period. Gothic carving was all on the same plane; its richness was more geometrical. In the Renaissance Style, the planes are innumerable. The nudity of its ridges and lines disappears. Supports, panels, cornices and frontons are all covered with ornamental details grouped into episodes, each of which has its own life and centre of action.

" The special characteristic of the style is the monumental façade of most of the pieces of furniture. They are Roman temples with Orders of architecture one above another: the Doric below, the Ionic in the middle, and the Corinthian on top. The whole is surmounted by a pediment, the apex of which is cut out, and in the hollow is placed a bust, or vase, or statuette. In the panels of the intercolumniations and

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PLATE V

Gothic Bedstead

Nuremberg Museum

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in the uprights are niches, framed in an architectural motive which shelter figures of antique heroes or divinites. Sometimes there are round medallions, like windows, from which protrude curious heads with outstretched necks.

"The most frequent motives of decoration of this style are Classic columns, pediments, broken pediments, heads in hollows, termed figures, garlands, pagan divinities, antique heroes, initial letters cut out and tied with strings of foliage, caryatides, grotesque faces, the F. of François I. and the salamander, his attributes. In the painted or carved arabesques are mingled the animal and vegetable worlds; imaginary beings, half-animal, half-vegetable, are entwined with garlands and foliage.

Henri II. Style

"The *Style Henri II.* is more severe and geometrical than that of François I. The ornamentation of the projections shows more restraint, and the general shape of the object is more rectangular. The vertical dominates the horizontal. Columns with long shafts finely fluted take the place of the human figures that acted as supports in the preceding period." [1]

The *grand lit à baldaquin* of the period of François I., reproduced on Plate XIII., is one of the treasures of the Cluny Museum. It was carved by French artists, and is greatly admired for the elegance of the details of its decoration. The baldachin is supported in front by columns, and at the back by figures of Victory and Mars. The ornamentation of the headboard is elaborate, consisting of a ducal crown, fruits, mascarons, rosettes and dolphins. The hangings and coverings are of later date than the bed, having belonged to Pierre de Gondi, Bishop of Paris.

[1] P. Rouaix.

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A handsome armoire made in the Ile de France in the middle of the Sixteenth Century, reproduced on Plate XIV., is of unusual construction. The lower part is open: the upper part consists of cupboards and drawers. The central door is decorated with a figure of Hebe in a medallion surmounted by genii. The side doors have niches containing pyramids.

For the characteristics of the furniture of the second half of the Seventeenth Century there is no higher authority than M. Bonnaffé, who says:

"With Charles IX. and Henri III. the type still remains excellent, but is richer and more effective. The carving is abundant, the mouldings graved, the ornaments strapped, and the reliefs are more strongly accented. It is the reign of caryatides, terms, satyrs and chimæras which the artists multiply with inexhaustible imagination. Du Cerceau designs for the workshops new arrangements and combinations which are sometimes singular, but always of great ingenuity. Gilding and silvering were lavishly employed. A contemporary says that people wanted all their furniture to be gilded, silvered and inlaid.

"Checked by the civil and religious wars, the furniture industry revived under Henri IV. The designs are somewhat heavy and overloaded, but still of grand appearance and fine execution. The over-long columns, joined or surrounded by foliage and rising as high as the cornice, the panels adorned with cavaliers, the moustached terms, and the inlays of fine copper thread and mother-of-pearl belong to this period."

The greatest name of this period is that of Androuet Du Cerceau, who was born about 1510 and who travelled when young into Italy, where he fell under the influence of Bramante. On his return home, he issued designs that were practically taken from that architect. His idea was to make

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PLATE VI

Gothic Press from the Tyrol (about 1500)

Nuremberg Museum

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popular in France the forms and designs of Italian art. Among the engravings that he published was an album containing seventy-one designs for furniture, including twenty-one cabinets or dressoirs, twenty-four tables, eight beds, a choir-stall, two brackets, a panel, an overmantel, three terminals and eight socles or pedestals.

"The complicated prodigality of lines and ornaments in these designs is perfectly astonishing," a modern observer remarks, "and arouses a doubt as to whether it would be possible to reproduce them exactly; but this was evidently not the intention of the author, as proved by the works executed during and after his time. All he wished was that his book should be, so to speak, a mine of ideas, from which craftsmen might borrow architectural combinations and decorative motives, to be arranged according to their own individual taste. Hence the overloading of every engraving with superfluous detail, which no one, we should imagine, would be so unreasonable as to attempt to copy servilely." [1]

The French readily assimilated the new Italian ideas and soon formed schools of their own. The most famous of these is the Burgundian, which was largely indebted to the work of Hughes Sambin, an architect and master carpenter, who was about ten years younger than Du Cerceau and who died in 1602. He studied under Michael Angelo and published between his architectural works an album of designs for caryatides and made and superintended the construction of a number of pieces of furniture.

"In these minor works the Burgundian artist gave proof of a very prolific and powerful imagination. He lavished carvings of figures, fruit and foliage on the surface of the wood with a view to giving a general impression of richness, whilst Du Cerceau gave more attention to grace of line, and relied for effect chiefly upon the wealth of beautiful but

[1] André Saglio.

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often minute detail. The former delighted in carving lions' heads, eagles with mighty wings, voluptuous women and muscular satyrs with merry faces. The latter was a fervent admirer of the long-limbed, elegant-looking goddesses which Jean Goujon borrowed from the Italian artists who worked at Fontainebleau, and which became widely popular through the work of the school that took its name from this favorite residence of François I. and Henri II." [1]

De Champeaux says: "It is the taste for caryatides and grotesque figures surrounded by garlands, and supporting broken pediments that predominate in all his compositions. The result is a certain character of heaviness and *bizarrerie* that is more conspicuous in the buildings contributed by him than in his furniture, for the material of the latter, less cold than stone, allows more scope to the original fantasy of the artist. The furniture inspired by Sambin's designs does not exhibit the ponderous grace of the armoires and buffets made in Paris; the lines are not traced with the same tasteful harmony; but it must be recognized that no school equals the vigor and the dramatic expression of the Burgundian artists of this period. The figures of the caryatides and chimerical animals that support the various parts of their furniture and conceal the uprights, are animated with a brutal energy that only skilful chisels can create. Moreover, the walnut wood of which they are carved has been clothed with a warm tone that sometimes equals that of Florentine bronzes."

Another cabinet-maker of the period was Nicholas Bachelier, who was also an architect, engineer, sculptor and designer of furniture.

The carved wood chair on Plate XV. shows that this form of the high-backed chair of honor of the Middle Ages continued in favor during the Renaissance. Apart from the

[1] André Saglio.

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PLATE VII

Gothic Cupboard with Linenfold Panels

Nuremberg Museum

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motives used for the decoration, the only development noticeable is the breaking up of the sides and arms of the seat into legs and posts. The smooth columns and plain bulb feet are a welcome relief from the riot of carving of much contemporary work. This chair was superseded by others of lighter form before the close of the Seventeenth Century.

The Jesuit Style

At this period, too, what is familiarly known as the "Jesuit Style" makes its appearance. In 1603, the Jesuits, who had been expelled from France in 1595, were recalled, and on their return began to build colleges and churches. Their leader, Étienne Martellange, of Lyons, who had studied architecture in Rome, inaugurated the pseudo-classic Roman style in building and in designs for furniture, but the more popular designation of "Jesuit" is usually given to it. Lyons was a great centre for fine carving and beautiful furniture, and, like Burgundy, was a rival of Paris as regards this art.

The Spanish Renaissance

The great wave of the Renaissance flowed into Spain, but it was carried thither not by Italian artists but across the Pyrenees by the French and Flemish painters, carvers and weavers. The political relations between Spain and the Low Countries account for the great horde of Flemish workers that flocked to the country where there was vast wealth. Juan de Arphe reproached his contemporaries for copying the designs of the Flemings; but with little effect. The Gothic school of carving lasted until 1530, in which year Berruguete returned to Spain from Italy, where he had studied in the studio of Michael Angelo. Nicholas

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Bachelier of Toulouse, Geronimo Hernandez and Gregorio Pardo also contributed to the development of the new style in Spain.

Señor J. F. Riaño says: "The brilliant epoch of sculpture (in wood) belongs to the Sixteenth Century, and was due to the great impulse it received from the works of Berruguete and Felipe de Borgoñu. He was the chief promoter of the Italian style, and the choir of the Cathedral of Toledo, where he worked so much, is the finest specimen of the kind in Spain. Toledo, Seville, and Valladolid were at the time great productive and artistic centres."

Regarding the decorative features of this school, M. Bonnaffé says:

"If the tormented attitudes, excessive anatomy, and muscular effects recall the Florentine manner, yet the types remain frankly Spanish; the eye is dug with a deep and sure stroke that makes the arch of the brow stand strongly out, the arms and legs end in leaves, or in volutes of a particular turn. The painted and gilded woods are treated with great skill and decorative refinements that denote a finished art. Spanish walnut has a close grain, and a singularly polished and lustrous surface. Cedar, cypress, and pine were principally used for the figures. Oak was imported from France and England, as it was scarce in Spain."

"In Germany the Renaissance appeared under the powerful influence and fruitful example of Albrecht Dürer who developed it to a high degree. Wood and copper engraving were a strong means of propagation for him and his pupils and they all used them freely to supply the workshops of all industries with the varied models of their ingenious inspiration."

Thus writes M. de Laborde; and, after studying the extant specimens of the furniture of that period and the designs of the masters of ornament, from Dürer to Diet-

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terlin, M. Bonnaffé decides that "the German was an impenitent Gothic who was never touched with the grace of the Renaissance. He accepted it unwillingly, coarsened it, dislocated it, made its profiles heavy, and its propositions unnatural and excessive. The features of German workmanship are apparent at first sight; rigid figures, intentional ugliness, a wealth of complicated ornaments executed with marvellous skill, shrivelled foliage, and deeply cut drapery extravagantly broken. The hands are long, thin and thick-jointed, the caryatides are hip-shot, the faces protrude violently out of the frame. The thing as a whole is tormented, labored, tangled and tumultuous. There is no taste, but an inexhaustible animation; no grace and abandon, but the male, robust, passionate gait; an extreme striving for effect, character and expression; and undeniable power.

"This exuberant realism, controlled by the genius of Albrecht Dürer, and tempered by Italian infiltration, produced works full of quality, and, for more than half a century, the school, carried along by the first impulsion of the master, continued its way, thanks to the vitality it had acquired. But when the day arrived on which it had no longer a leader, enthusiasm or counterpoise, and had nothing but itself to depend upon, the art followed in the wake of the Flemings and Italians of the Decadence. Germany had played its part: it still kept its accent, but no longer had a school or artists.

"The Italian Decadence was rapid. Towards the end of the Sixteenth Century, the forms became bizarre, mannered and affected. The artist carries the imitation of temples and triumphal arches to extremes; he neglects carpentry, abuses soft woods that allow of summary methods and cheap carving, and is so lavish with decoration as to leave no rest for the eyes. The old marquetry of wood gives place to inlays of ivory, mother-of-pearl and shell, precious stones, and colored marbles, charged with applications of chased

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silver or gilt bronze. Wood was painted, gilded and disguised in a thousand ways; it was covered with marquetry, veneer, ivory and stone; as a last resort, it was carved on every side rather than let it be visible. Everybody strove to denaturalize it and make it say more than it knew; Florence covered it with mosaics, or gave it heroic poses; Venice twined it into crossettes, *cuirs* and volutes, enriched with gold; Milan enveloped it with ebony and ivory; Sienna carved it to perfection, but with a dry, poor, cold, sharp tool, the tool of a carver who wants to show what he knows. The Italians excelled in the art of wood-work, as in everything else; but they comprehended it in their own way. With them the art consisted in disguising the wood: our aim was to give it its full value."

The English Renaissance or Elizabethan

The characteristics of the English Renaissance furniture, known as "Elizabethan," are carved human figures or medallions, masks, fruits, floral and chimerical animal forms, strap-work, bulbs, arabesques, nail-heads and gadroons. Sometimes the linen-fold, or tracery of the old style, accompanies the medallions of the new on the same piece of furniture. The carving as a rule is not so delicate as the contemporary French or Italian. Oak still predominates, but walnut is more common and marquetry of native and foreign woods is in great favor. The principal woods used in inlaying were walnut, ebony, rosewood, pear, cherry, apple, box, ash, yew and holly. Pear-wood was often stained black to imitate ebony.



ENGLISH CARVED OAK BEDSTEAD, SIXTEENTH CENTURY

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PLATE IX

Gothic Chairs

Munich Museum

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In England the Renaissance made slow progress. Henry VIII. imported able Italian artists and workmen for decorating Nonsuch House and other mansions, but the foreign novelties did not bear fruit quickly. "The English School does not possess that unity and assimilation of those schools that know exactly what to select among the new elements and combine them skilfully so as to form a new, rejuvenated and yet national art. Its character is sometimes Germanized Italian, sometimes bastard Flemish, with a touch of Anglicism in the heads and costumes; for, as M. Laborde remarks, the Englishman is always insular, and exclusively copies the types and faces of his own country.

"At the very height of the Elizabethan style, it is still a hard matter to distinguish between native wood-work and that produced by the Flemings who took refuge in England during the Spanish oppression. The English School is ruder and more material. The figure drawing is very inferior; and there is a liking for grotesque attitudes, odd composition and excessive ornamentation. There is, however, a style about the whole; it has a certain air of sumptuous grandeur which we cannot despise. Its favorite wood is oak; sometimes it employs pear, ebony, and marquetry. The old inventories also mention works in cypress-wood."[1]

Plate XVI. shows a typical court-cupboard of this period, of carved oak with the bulb ornaments as supports. A later court-cupboard, also of carved oak and American make, appears on Plate XVII. The date attributed is 1680–1690. Both pieces are in the Metropolitan Museum.

In Flanders, the Renaissance appeared early, and made rapid progress. A French authority thus describes its features:

"Gothic by race and a carpenter *par excellence,* the Fleming remained faithful to the oak. He knew how to make

[1] Bonnaffé.

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the most of it and to relieve its somewhat rude and severe aspect by an abundant and varied imagination, an ingenious appropriateness of form, spirited tool-work and correct design. His somewhat short and squat figures do not possess the realism of the German, the distinction of the French, nor the grand bearing of the Italian; they are full, well-fed, smiling, expressive and of exquisite naturalism. The Flemish Renaissance speaks Spanish, German or French, according to the fashion, and so fluently that we do not always distinguish the country accent on first hearing. But in the evil days of the Decadence, the national temperament resumed its rights; the school, full of life and sap at the start, broad and luxuriant in its maturity, grew dull and heavy in its old age. Vredeman de Vries laboriously imitated the delicacies of Du Cerceau; Goltzius closely follows him with his puffy, corpulent figures. The artist works by rule; the decoration is monotonous; we find everywhere leather, cut, scooped, shrivelled imitations of carved wood. Soon ebony and colored species of wood imported from the Indies arrive in the market, and trade produces those immense works, monuments of massive carpentry, covered with diamond points and guilloche mouldings. The Sixteenth Century has spoken its last word." [1]

The first Flemish designers who adopted the style of the Renaissance were Alaert Claas, Lucas van Leyden and Cornelis Bos. Claas (painter and engraver) worked in Utrecht from 1520 to 1555. Lucas van Leyden (painter and engraver), whose family name was Damesz, was born in Leyden in 1494 and died in 1533. Cornelis Bos (glass painter, architect and engraver), was born in Bois-le-Duc about 1510. Another artist and engraver of the same school of decorative art was Martin van Heemskerck (1494–1574). Then came Cornelius and James Floris, whose family name

[1] De Champeaux.

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PLATE X

Bedstead, dated 1530, owned by the Princess Palatine Susanna

Munich Museum

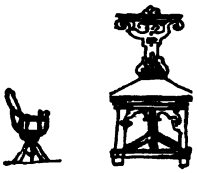
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was De Vriendt. Cornelius had four sons: John, a potter, who settled in Spain; Frans Floris (1518?–70), a painter; James (1524–81), a celebrated glass-painter; and Cornelius (1514–74), a sculptor and architect.

James was also a skilful engraver and was particularly noted for his panels, or compartments, which in his day were such favorite designs.

Cornelius and James Floris developed a new style, still known as the Floris style. Contemporary with Floris were Hans Liefrinck (1510–80); Cornelis Matsys (1500–56); Jerome Cock (1510–70); John Landenspelder (*b.* 1511); Adrian Collaert (*b.* 1520); Hans Collaert (1540–1622); and Vredeman de Vries (1527–?). The designs consist chiefly of grotesques, cartouches, "*cuirs*," panels, compartments, friezes, trophies, "*pendeloques*" and other goldsmiths' motives. About 1580, De Vries published *Differents Pourtraicts de Menuiserie à scavoir, Portaux, Bancs, Tables, Escabelles, Buffets, Frises, Corniches, Licts de camp, Ornements à prendre à l'essuoir les mains, Fontaines à laver les mains.* De Vries was the pupil of Peter Coeck of Alost (1502–1550), who was a follower of Serlio, and owing to his varied knowledge and versatility may be said to sum up in himself the whole period of the Flemish Renaissance. In his own country, De Vries was called the "king of architects." He was contemporary of Du Cerceau and was either influenced by that great French master, or, what is equally probable, both derived their style from the same Italian source. Hans Vredeman de Vries, however, is not so light and graceful as the French Jacques Androuet du Cerceau. De Vries still preserves the old forms which, however, receive new ornamentation. His furniture still



VENETIAN CHAIR, 1500, AND FLEMISH CHAIR BY DE VRIES, 1560

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seems designed for the room it occupies and the tables, benches, bedsteads and chairs are still extremely heavy. The old linen-fold pattern dies hard, panelling is still in vogue and little upholstery occurs in his plates.

The works of Sebastian Serlio of Bologna were much studied in the Low Countries; and Peter Coeck of Alost was largely instrumental in making them popular because he translated Serlio's books into French and Flemish, and engraved all the plates with his own hand, besides teaching his theories to enthusiastic pupils.

Serlio eventually became the leading spirit of the School of Fontainebleau, established by Francis I., to which so many other Italian artists were attracted, and to which the Flemings flocked.

Other designers of this period were Jacques van Noye; Mark Gevaerts (1530–90); Hendrick Van Schoel; Martin de Vos (1531–1603); G. Tielt (1580–1630); Cornelius Grapheus (1549–?); Baltazar Silvius (*circ.* 1554); Guilhelmus de la Queweelerie (*circ.* 1560); Peter Miricenis (1520–66); Hans Bol (1535–93); Abraham de Bruyn (1538–?); Crispin de Passe, the Elder (1536–?); Peter van der Borcht (1540–1608); Peter Baltens (1540–79); Paul Van Wtanvael (*circ.* 1570); Nicholas de Bruyn (1560–1635); Clement Perrete (*circ.* 1569); Assuerus Van Londerseel (*b.* 1548); Jerome Wierix (*b.* 1551); John Wierix (*b.* 1550); John Sadeler (1550–1610); Raphael Sadeler (1555–1628); Ægidius Sadeler (1570–1629); Dominic Custode (*b.* 1560); Ger. Groningus; Cornelis Galle (1570–1641); Philip Galle (1537–1612); Theodore Galle (*b.* 1560); Cornelis Dankherts (*b.* 1561); John Sambuci (*circ.* 1574); Francis Sweert (*circ.* 1690); Judocus Hondius (1563–1611); James Hannervogt.

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PLATE XI

Italian Renaissance Chest

Metropolitan Museum

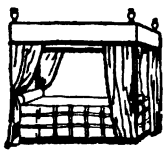
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Styles and Schools

Louis XIII. Style

In the Seventeenth Century, the sculptured furniture of the time of Henri IV. was superseded by the simpler styles of Louis XIII. which we see in the engravings by Abraham Bosse. The carver and sculptor was succeeded by the joiner and turner (*menuisier*), finely carved columns were supplanted by uprights, every piece of furniture was rectangular, or nearly so; and draperies became of the utmost importance. Everything was hidden: the curtains of the bed completely covered the framework; and, when drawn, made the bed a perfect square. The curtains were often decorated with braid or lace applied so as to form little squares. The table, likewise, disappeared beneath the cloth, which was put on very tightly across the slab and then flowed in ample folds at each corner. The cloth not only reached but often lay upon the floor. Many of the chairs of the day were described as "in the Italian taste," — that is, covered with velvet and trimmed with lace, or fringe.



BED, ABRAHAM BOSSE

The monumental and ornate cabinets, imported from Germany, Italy and Flanders, were a novelty; and the Italian taste brought to France the vogue of incrustations of mosaics, hard stones, painted plates, mother-of-pearl, ivory, and amber. Brass inlay and tortoise-shell work on a background of wood mark the beginning of the style that was soon to bear the name of Boulle.

Regarding the general form of the furniture of this period there is a tendency to divide pieces into two unequal parts (the upper part being the shorter), by means of a cornice, shelf, or some decorative line: cabinets, armoires, etc., are monumental and architectural, surmounted by a broken pedi-

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ment. In many cases, the mouldings frame panels in which the square form predominates. Chairs are square, as are the bedsteads; the twisted column, spiral leg, and the baluster grow ever in popularity; console-tables and *guéridons* increase in favor; and heavy mirror-frames become an important feature of decoration.

The hexagon, which was so much used in the Henri II. period, is now supplanted by the octagon: the cartouche is a favorite ornament; is wider than it is high; and swells out into an exaggerated convex curve. Balusters also become corpulent, as do vases. The latter, moreover, stand on small bases.

Of the *Style Louis Treize,* Rouaix says: "At the beginning of the Seventeenth Century, Marie de' Medicis brought to France the Italians of the Decadence, with their bizarre taste, their abuse of theatrical and complicated decoration and their passion for ebony and colored woods. The value of the work no longer consisted in the modelling of the reliefs, the variety of the planes, and the play of light and shade, but in the variety of color and the variety of the material. The art of furniture suffered a complete change of physiognomy; assembled panels were given up in favor of smooth surfaces that would allow the inlay of tiny leaves, making the most of costly woods and their coloration. Forsaken by fashion, furniture of walnut wood rapidly declined. The antique column, straight and strong, became bent and twisted; the used-up, commonplace ornament had no longer any youth or energy. The carver yielded first place to the inlayer.

"The faces of the mascarons are chubby and expressionless and the cornucopias, which are so much used, are very slender, although they are overflowing with fruits. Apples and pears are the favorite fruits. The garlands are composed of fruits and leaves and very seldom are any flowers used."

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PLATE XII

Burgundian *Dressoir* (1570)

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The Louis XIII. Style is dominated by the Flemish spirit. Rubens was called to Paris by Marie de' Medicis in 1625 and set the fashion in decorative art. Simon Vouet was the chief of the French masters. The compositions of Abraham Bosse, Della Bella, Mitelli and Légaré also illustrate the style. "The characteristic impression is one of heaviness and weariness. The furniture is sombre. Dark tones prevail and the marquetry of this period, consisting of metal, wood and tortoise-shell, is somewhat severe and cold. The ornament comprises round, inflated cartouches, massive balusters, twisted columns, heavy garlands (of large fruits, apples and pears, with few leaves), and strong mouldings almost bare of ornament." [1]

The Rubens Style

At this period, the Rubens Style dominated everything in France. Rubens had spent eight years in Mantua and we see in his designs a fusion of Flemish and Italian influences. Two years after Rubens's death, Crispin van den Passe published at Amsterdam in 1642 his *Boutique Menuiserie,* which contains several plates of furniture. The Rubens Style had not abated.

Simon Vouet was one of the artists employed by the splendor-loving Cardinal Richelieu to decorate his Palais Royal and Castle of Rueil.

Goldsmiths were greatly influential in forming the new style; and it is difficult in looking over the work of all the designers of the period to determine what belongs to the reigning fashion and what is original. One of the most original artists is generally conceded to be Della Bella, "who exhibited a personality so free from all influences that a goodly number of his models would more appropriately pass

[1] Rouaix.

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as belonging to the style of Louis XIV. rather than to that of Louis XIII."

The Genre Auriculaire

One of the most curious motives of ornamentation in this period was the human ear. The lines of the outer rim and the lobe, as well as those of the whole ear, were carried to excess and distorted and tortured into scrolls and curves of all sizes and shapes. Rabel was one of the chief exponents of the *genre auriculaire* (from auricle) in France. Several Dutch designers published plates of drawings, among whom were John Lutma and Gerbrandt van den Eeckhout; but it was in Germany that this peculiar style met with the greatest favor. The plates of Friederich Unteutsch, published in Frankfort in 1650, show the ear prominent as an ornament on all kinds of furniture; and nothing could be more eccentric.

Three chairs from the Parma Museum of Antiquities (Plate XVIII.) exemplify Italian taste in the second half of the Seventeenth Century. The legs, stretchers and arms show whence the French designers under Louis XIV. drew their inspiration. The backs also have a family likeness to chairs that came into fashion later in England, France and Holland. The scroll work on the chair in the centre is almost as unrestrained as in the designs of Meissonnier and Chippendale. The curves of the rococo and the *genre auriculaire* are both present.

When we examine the old furniture of the palaces and museums of Italy, we are sometimes amazed to find that the forms and styles particularly of seats are almost identical with those of France, England, or the Netherlands. Thus, the beautiful chair covered with Cordovan leather on Plate XIX., owned by Count Stefano Orsetti in Lucca, is a product of the Seventeenth Century; and yet the scrolled

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PLATE XIII

Carved Bedstead, François I.

Cluny Museum

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bars that connect the legs and the legs themselves greatly resemble the Dutch furniture made for Hampton Court in 1690. Again, the chair, Plate XX., No. 3, is similar in its turned supports, front rail and the tall panelled back to the cane chairs in vogue under Charles II. and William and Mary; and yet it is a Roman chair of the Seventeenth Century, now in the Museo Civico, Milan.

It is well known that famous French and Flemish masters of decorative design studied in Italy in the Sixteenth, Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries, but the Italians did not seek inspiration north of the Alps, so that when we find identical forms, we look to Italy as the leader, or seek a common origin.

The Jacobean Period

The style of furniture in the Jacobean period differed but little from the Elizabethan, though it showed less originality and became more formal.

"Designs grew flatter and the treatment of floral ornament more stiff and conventional. Another feature of the decoration was that ornaments were frequently applied and not cut out of the solid. The most prominent details of the ornament was strap-work and half balusters or drops; jewels and bosses were also common. Geometrical arrangements of panelling such as a lozenge-shaped panel within a square or rectangle surrounded by four L-shaped panels frequently occur." [1]

This style lasted until the end of the century.

Carved figures were gradually supplanted by turned supports and uprights; and the surfaces were panelled with geometrical designs and decorated with applied ornaments of real or imitation ebony.

[1] Pollen.

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Plate XXI. represents a Court cupboard of this character — a style that was long in vogue in England's colonies. Pieces of this type are occasionally found in the old homes of New England.

Sir Henry Wotton, ambassador to Venice in 1604, sent home some specimens of Italian wood-carving and published *Elements of Architecture;* Sir Walter Raleigh sent for a Flemish workman to carve his fine oak chimney-piece at his house in Youghal, Ireland; and in the reign of James I., Inigo Jones, "the English Vitruvius," returned from Italy as a follower of Palladio. The Great Fire of London (1666) brought Sir Christopher Wren's talents into special prominence.

The Tudor Style died hard, however, and some of the old motives of carving lingered long; but the new styles had taken root.

Pear-wood, owing to the evenness of the grain and the beautiful color, has always been a favorite with English carvers and cabinet-makers, especially for jewel-boxes and small caskets. Grinling Gibbons worked much in this wood, and at this period produced his beautiful garlands of fruits and flowers for overmantels and frames that are still the admiration and despair of carvers.

Exotic woods began to be imported into the Low Countries and England by the traders with the East and the New World; and so, in addition to oak, walnut, cedar, olive and nutwood, there were, among other novelties, king-wood from Brazil, a hard wood with black veins on a chocolate ground; pale red beef-wood from New Holland, much used for borders; *palissandre,* or violet wood, from New Guinea, used for inlays on fine furniture and for such fine pieces as commodes, etc.; and *sacredaan,* or Java mahogany, yellow, or pale orange in color, very hard and very fragrant.

A favorite ornament for table-legs, posts of bedsteads and

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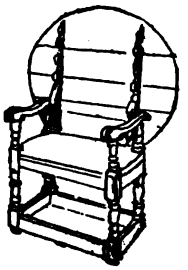
PLATE XIV

Armoire Île de France. Middle of Sixteenth Century

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supports of cupboards and cabinets was the swelling bulb. This was sometimes carved with a leaf or floral device and sometimes stained black. Mouldings and panels were much used, and the spindle ornament, cut in half, stained black and applied to the surface. Lozenges and ovals were also stained black and applied in this style. Turned furniture was fast supplanting carved articles and the Age of Oak was fast disappearing. Lacquer varnish was much used in England, and there was quite a rage for "painted and japanned" furniture.



CHAIR-TABLE, SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

Another favorite embellishment of broad surfaces was to inlay them with woods of different colors in various designs. The latter taste rapidly advanced during this century with the constantly increasing importation of the beautiful exotic woods from the East and West Indies. Until the Sixteenth Century, marquetry seems to have consisted entirely of ivory and ebony; but now strange woods were employed. In the famous pamphlet, *L'Isle des Hermaphrodites,* directed against Henri III. and his Court, the author says: "As for the furniture, we should like to have it all of gold, silver, and marquetry, and the pieces, especially the canopies of the beds, if possible, of cedar, rose, and other odoriferous woods, unless you would rather have them of ebony or ivory."

The Italians of the Decadence had a passion for ebony and colored woods, and theatrical and complicated decorations. Furniture completely changed its physiognomy; the decorative panels with all their ornaments are renounced for plain surfaces on which marquetry can be displayed to advantage. Forsaken by fashion, walnut drops out of use; profiles are multiplied; the fine *cuirs* that were cut in solid bosses sprawl about in an enervated, weakened

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fashion; the straight, firm, and springing Classic column now becomes twisted and distorted; and the stale and banal decoration has neither sinews nor youth. The sculptor yields his place to the marquetry worker and the carpenter (*menuisier*) becomes a cabinet-maker (*ébéniste*).

At this period Italy carried to perfection the peculiar inlay of rare and polished marbles, agates, pebbles and lapis-lazuli called *pietra dura* and the style was imitated in other countries; so that during the Decadence the old marquetry of wood gave place to incrustrations of mother-of-pearl, shell, precious stones, colored marbles, painted glass, and the furniture was made even more sumptuous by the additions of key-plates, handles, feet and other trimmings, or mounts, of silver or gilded bronze (*or-moulu*). A new kind of marquetry made its appearance in the Seventeenth Century, and seems to have originated in the Low Countries. It consisted of large designs of flowers, particularly the tulip, birds and foliage represented in various woods very brightly dyed. Bits of ivory or mother-of-pearl were added to give brightness to the eyes of the birds and the petals of the flowers. This kind of marquetry was very popular in England when William and Mary reigned, when Dutch taste dominated the fashions in everything; and was probably inspired by the East.

On Plates XXII. and XXIII. a very interesting cabinet of this style is exhibited, open and closed. This piece belongs to the Metropolitan Museum and is attributed to the reign of Queen Anne. The decoration is in the "Chinese" style.

Oriental Influences

Here we may perhaps pause to review the effect produced by early contact with the East.

During the Sixteenth Century, while the Portuguese had

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PLATE XV

Chair. Lyonnais. Sixteenth Century

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a monopoly of the trade of the Far East, a great deal of Oriental furniture was brought to Lisbon, and from there carried to Northern Europe. In Elizabethan days also, piratical navigators often brought Portuguese cargoes into English ports, and consequently we find lacquer and porcelain in the inventories of the rich.

From 1497, when Vasco da Gama rounded the Cape of Good Hope and discovered the sea route to India, the Portuguese held a monopoly of the trade of the Far East for a hundred years. During that time, a vast amount of Oriental wares was brought into the Tagus and distributed thence through Northern Europe, principally by Dutch ships, but the Renaissance was in full flower, and the exotics made no impression on the style of the period. This is strange, because the importations were considerable. Between 1497 and 1521 Lisbon sent out 220 ships.

Writing in 1601, De Laval informs us that three or four carracks went out from Lisbon every year. They were the largest vessels in the world, being of 1500 and 2000 tons burden, having four decks, and not being able to float in less than ten fathoms of water. It took them three years to make the voyage to Goa, Cochin, Malacca, Sunda, Macao, and Japan, and back. These Portuguese ships therefore brought home all the choice wares and products of India, China, Japan and the Spice Islands.

De Laval says it is impossible to enumerate all the rare and beautiful things imported. Among those he mentions are "great store of gilded woodwork, such as all sorts of vessels and furniture lacquered, varnished and gilded with a thousand pretty designs, all kinds of silk stuffs, much porcelain ware, many boxes, plates and baskets made of little reeds covered with lacquer and varnished in all colors, gilded and patterned. Among other things, I should mention a great number of cabinets of all patterns in the fashion

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of those of Germany. This is an article of the most perfect and of the finest workmanship to be seen anywhere; for they are all of choice woods and inlaid with ivory, mother-of-pearl and precious stones: in place of iron they are mounted with gold. The Portuguese call them *Escritorios de la Chine.*"

The exclusive right of the Portuguese to the Eastern trade was not always respected by English and Dutch adventurers, for London and Amsterdam sometimes received diplomatic protests against violent intrusion, and irregular trade.

In 1580, Philip II., the master of the revolted Netherlands, seized Portugal, and, of course, closed Lisbon and all other ports against Dutch and English ships. It was not long before depredations by the latter were heard of in the Indian Ocean. In 1598, Cecil's Lisbon agent reports that three carracks have arrived from India, and one was burnt there full laden. They bring news that two English ships in India have taken two Portugal ships rich with treasure that were on their voyage from Goa to China. This gives point to De Laval's remark (1601) that the carracks are sent out "to return if they can."

In 1602, both the Dutch and English East India Companies were established; and for the rest of the century Amsterdam supplanted Lisbon as the emporium of Eastern wares. In the bitter competition that ensued, the Dutch outstripped the English; and the Magazine of the Indies in Amsterdam became the most important mart in Europe for porcelain and lacquer goods. London, however, received large shipments. As early as 1619, the inventory of the Earl of Northampton's effects includes the following articles from Far Cathay: "A China 'guilte cabonett' upon a frame; a large square China work table and frame of black varnish and gold; one fair crimson velvet chair richly em-

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PLATE XVI

Carved Oak Court-Cupboard. Tudor Period

Metropolitan Museum

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bossed with copper and spread eagles and blue and white flowers China work, the frame painted with gold, one small table of China work in gold and colors with flies and worms, a little gilded couch carved and cut, an ebony cabinet inlaid with mother-of-pearl; a very large bedstead with wreathed pillars for head, sides and feet all colored black and gold; a folding Indian screen; a China cushion embroidered with birds, beasts and flowers; and a field-bedstead of China work black and silver."

It was the porcelain and the smooth lacquered surfaces with contrasted colors that appealed to the Dutch and English; at first, they did not care for the designs of the artists of the East. We know this because they sent out patterns for the decorations of both porcelain and woodwork to suit the taste of the home market. The Chinese found it impossible to execute some of the orders. A Jesuit missionary of the day reported: " European merchants often order from the Chinese workmen porcelain plaques to form the top of a table, or back of a chair, or frame of a picture. These works are impossible; the greatest length and width of a plate is about one foot. If they are made larger than that, no matter how thick, they bend."

The Dutch East India Company imported enormous quantities of porcelain: the fleets of 1664-5 alone brought in more than sixty thousand pieces. Before this, however, the Dutch had begun to imitate the Oriental wares with great success, both in clay and varnish. Delft pottery soon became famous; and japanning in close imitation of lacquer was soon an important industry both in Holland and England. Home labor, however, cost more than foreign; and European manufacturers found it cheaper to have the panels, etc., decorated abroad and then make them up into furniture at home. This aroused great discontent in the trade towards the end of the century. The English japanners complained

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to the government, reciting their grievances. In 1702, one complaint states that in 1672 the East India Company sent agents abroad with a great quantity of English patterns for the Indians to manufacture the wares most marketable in England and other European countries. The cargoes of three ships sold at the East India House in 1700 give evidence that much lacquer-work was made up in England. The sale of the chinaware alone realized £150,000; and the other articles as much more. These included:

Fans	£38,557
Lacquered sticks for fans	13,470
Lacquered trunks, escritoires, bowls, cups, dishes	10,500
Lacquered inlaid tables	189
Lacquered panels, in frames, painted and carved for rooms	47
Lacquered boards	178
Lacquered brushes	3,099
Lacquered tables (not inlaid)	277
Lacquered fans for fire	174
Lacquered boards for screens	54
Screens set in frames	71
Paper josses	1,799
Shells double gilt	281

Paper painted for fans, images, pictures, brass for lanterns and embroideries.

The tall japanned clocks that were so popular for nearly a century after the accession of William and Mary in 1689, must have been constructed in England with the above-mentioned imported boards or panels, when not of home manufacture, because the tall clock was not in vogue in the East. Only the table clock was used there, and it seems that even this was a Euporean novelty in the Sixteenth Century. De Laval (1601) writes that among the goods taken by the Portuguese from Goa to China are "all sorts of glass and crystal ware and clocks which are highly

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PLATE XVII

Court or Press Cupboard. American. (1680–1690)
Metropolitan Museum

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prized by the Chinese." The latter soon profited from the models, for Samuedo says in his *History of China:* "The workmanship of Europe which they most admired was our clocks, but now they make of them such as are set upon tables, very good ones." The tall case-of-drawers on Plate XXIV. is a fine example of this lacquered work. Each drawer presents a different picture of Chinese scenes — houses, trees, birds, dragons, etc. The piece is in two parts. The case-of-drawers consists of four drawers and the stand of one long drawer and three short drawers below. In modern parlance this is frequently called a "high boy" and the stand is sometimes used as a "low boy." These names, however, never appear in the inventories. The cabriole legs with hoof feet preceded those of the claw-and-ball.

The craze for the Chinese style of ornament lasted in England till the accession of George III. Books of design containing so-called Chinese furniture had appeared before Chippendale, whose *Director* caters to the French, Gothic, and Chinese tastes of the middle of the century. Sir William Chambers wrote his book *Designs of Chinese Buildings, Furniture, Dresses, Machines, and Utensils* (1757), partly, as he explains in the preface, to put a stop to "the extraordinary fancies that daily appear under the name of Chinese, though most of them are mere inventions, the rest copies from the lame representations found on porcelain and paper hangings,"

This authority resided for some time in Canton, and therefore was able to write a trustworthy description of Chinese architecture and house decoration. He says:

"The movables of the saloon consist of chairs, stools, and tables; made sometimes of rosewood, ebony, or lacquered work, and sometimes of bamboo only, which is cheap, and, nevertheless, very neat. When the movables

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are of wood, the seats of the stools are often of marble or porcelain, which, though hard to sit on, are far from unpleasant in a climate where the summer heats are so excessive. In the corners of the rooms are stands four or five feet high, on which they set plates of citrons, and other fragrant fruits, or branches of coral in vases of porcelain, and glass globes containing goldfish, together with a certain weed somewhat resembling fennel; on such tables as are intended for ornament only they also place the little landscapes, composed of rocks, shrubs, and a kind of lily that grows among pebbles covered with water. Sometimes, also, they have artificial landscapes made of ivory, crystal, amber, pearls, and various stones. I have seen some of these that cost over 300 guineas, but they are at least mere baubles, and miserable imitations of Nature. Besides these landscapes they adorn their tables with several vases of porcelain, and little vases of copper, which are held in great esteem. These are generally of simple and pleasing forms. The Chinese say they were made two thousand years ago, by some of their celebrated artists, and such as are real antiques (for there are many counterfeits) they buy at an extravagant price, giving sometimes no less than £300 sterling for one of them.

"The bedroom is divided from the saloon by a partition of folding doors, which, when the weather is hot, are in the night thrown open to admit the air. It is very small, and contains no other furniture than the bed, and some varnished chests in which they keep their apparel. The beds are very magnificent; the bedsteads are made much like ours in Europe — of rosewood, carved, or lacquered work: the curtains are of taffeta or gauze, sometimes flowered with gold and commonly either blue or purple. About the top a slip of white satin, a foot in breadth, runs all round, on which are painted in panels different figures — flower pieces,

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PLATE XVIII

Seventeenth Century Chairs, Italian, carved and gilt
Parma Museum

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landscapes, and conversation pieces interspersed with moral sentences and fables written in Indian ink."

France took longer than Holland or England to feel the influence of the East. In the early years of the century, as we have seen, decoration was subject to the Italians patronized by Marie de' Medicis, and then came the *style Rubens*. In the next generation, Mazarin was a leading patron of Oriental art, which was apparently a revelation to the Court. We learn from the diary of La Grande Mademoiselle, the eccentric cousin of Louis XIV., that in 1658, the Cardinal gave a lottery in which everybody got a prize. Beforehand, he gave her, in company with Anne of Austria, Queen Henrietta Maria and her daughter, a private view of the treasures, taking them into a gallery, where, among other treasures displayed, were "all the beautiful things that come from China."

At this time, Oriental goods reached Paris by way of Amsterdam or London. The Jesuit missionaries contributed largely to the knowledge of their countrymen in this field. In 1660, John Evelyn, living in voluntary exile in Paris, notes in his diary:

"One Tomson, a Jesuit, showed me such a collection of rarities, sent from the Jesuits of Japan and China to their Order at Paris as a present to be received in their depository, but brought to London by the East India ships for them, as in my life I had not seen. The chief things were rhinosceros horns, glorious vests wrought and embroidered on cloth-of-gold, but with such lively colors that for splendor and vividness we have nothing in Europe that approaches it; fans like those our ladies use, but much larger, and with long handles curiously carved and filled with Chinese characters; a sort of paper very broad, thin and fine, like abortive parchment,[1] and exquisitely polished, of an amber

[1] Fine vellum.

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yellow, exceedingly glorious and pretty to look on; several other sorts of paper, some written, others printed; prints of landscapes, their idols, saints, pagods, of most ugly, serpentine, monstrous, and hideous shapes, to which they paid devotion; pictures of men and countries rarely printed on a sort of gum'd calico, transparent as glasse; flowers, trees, beasts, birds, etc., excellently wrought in a sort of sleve silk very naturall."

Louis XIV. Style

In 1667, the manufactory of the Gobelins was established with the painter Le Brun as director. The beautiful work of all kinds that was sent from there was greatly responsible for changing the styles of the day. French taste began to dominate Europe; and when the French Court removed to Versailles in 1682, the furnishing of which had cost the king a fortune, and for which nearly everything had been supplied by the Gobelins works, the eyes of the world were turned to the splendors of the Sun-King.

The characteristic design of this period consists of the straight line and the curve. The curve is bold. Interlaced bars, or bars ending in scrolls, are found in the forms of furniture, in the inlays of brass and wood and upon the walls of rooms. The architectural mouldings are stout and wide and are rich in such classic ornaments as palm-leaves and ovolos. The geometrical ensemble is always simple: furniture is often rectangular, put together very solidly and is always rather heavy. The bases and supports rest firmly on the floor and are usually close to it and the straining-rails are heavy as will be noticed in the chair on Plate XXV. Tables are supported on pilasters, or massive columns; and the *bombé* sweep often appears in such articles as consoles and commodes (see Plate XXVI.).

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PLATE XIX

Seventeenth Century Arm-Chair covered with Cordovan Leather

Lucca

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The general style of the ornamentation, particularly when Lepautre dominated the general taste, was Roman, according perfectly with the style of the architecture, which was also Roman and heroic. Classic trophies are massed together like the spoils of battle. We find cuirasses, plumed helmets, shields, lictor's fasces, laurel wreaths, clubs and swords; allegorical divinities representing vanquished Rivers; mythological dieties; winged Victories; Victories blowing trumpets; River-gods leaning on their urns; and the cornucopia, which is much heavier than the horn of plenty used in the days of Louis XIII. and has a wider mouth. The acanthus, like every other leaf, becomes broad, bloated and strong, and the garlands, or swags of fruits, flowers or leaves, are exceedingly heavy. On the cartouche, which is both circular, or a perfect oval, is displayed the coat-of-arms, the fleur-de-lys, or the double L — the cypher of the King. The mascaron is omnipresent; and a combination of scroll and shell is much used. The anthemion, or honeysuckle pattern, is a favorite central ornament.

In furniture, the newest and most striking articles are the supports of the tables, the consoles, and the *guéridons* destined to support crystal girandoles; the Italian mosaics of stones and the ebony furniture and French furniture consisting of incrustations of metal and shell on a bed of wood, or marquetry of colored woods. Notable are the supports and architectural members of furniture ornamented by plump figures — men and women, figures *en gaîne*, chimæræ, groups of children or genies holding garlands and festoons. The standing screen (*écran*) is quite popular.

Some critics think that the splendid silver furniture that came into the French Court with Anne of Austria was responsible for developing a taste for carved and gilded furniture. However that may be, it is a fact that the taste for the latter was not confined to the wealthy. The frames

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of the chairs and sofas, the tables, the mirrors (now being made at the Gobelin manufactory), were elaborately carved and gilded and adorned comparatively modest dwellings.

The heavy and enormous chimney-piece of the foregoing reign was abandoned for the "little chimney-piece"; mirrors brightened the walls, the panels of which were painted and gilt, carved and gilt, or hung with tapestries of bright hues; the floors were inlaid with handsome woods and the rich brocades, damasks and velvets from Lyons, Genoa and Flanders that were used to cover the seats and drape the beds were of bright colors. Among the new hues, a flame color, called *aurora,* and a purplish red, called *amaranth,* were especially popular.

During the reign of Louis XIV. there was a rage for fine marbles. Colored marbles were brought to France from Italy and Africa; and some old quarries in France were opened; Verde antique (Egyptian marble), Violet Brocatelle; alabaster; blue marbles; yellow marbles; red marbles; yellow marbles with red veins; speckled marbles; and many other varieties were employed, not only for chimney-pieces and other decorations, but for the tops of commodes, bureaus, etc.

The first part of this period was dominated by Le Brun, and the last by Bérain.

Le Brun was a marvel of industry: "Between 1663 and 1690, he drew the cartoons after which were woven nineteen hangings, that is to say, 84,000 ells of tapestry; and at the same time, he was executing or directing the decorations at Versailles, Saint-Germain and Marly, making designs for the royal plate, architectural plans, such as those for the church of Saint Eustache, the Gates of Paris, the Fountains of Versailles, making suggestions for the decoration of ships, and collaborating with numerous sculptors in the erection of various monuments. All this personal work was got through

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PLATE XX

Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century Venetian and Roman Chairs and a Tyrolean Stool (*Escarbeau*)

Museo Civico, Milan

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in addition to the daily official duties of the superintendent of the manufactory, in which lived not only a whole population of artists and workmen, but also sixty poor children apprenticed to the trade by the Treasury. It is greatly to the credit of Le Brun that he knew how to gather about him to aid him in carrying out the vast commissions of Louis XIV. all the most eminent artists of the day; in fact we may almost say he was instrumental in their rise; and when we see the list of their names, it is impossible to help admiring the liberal-mindedness of this great man and his skill in associating with each other men of the most varied gifts, and of leading them by the force of his own example to collaborate in works of a most diverse character. At the Gobelins Manufactory, Le Brun induced the painters Van der Meulen, Monnoyer, Yvart, the two Boullognes, Noël and Antoine Coypel, with the sculptors Coysevox, Anguier, Tuby and Caffieri, and the engravers, Le Clerc, Audran and Rousselet, to work side by side with the ebenists Cucci, Pierre, Poitou, the jewellers Alexis Loir, Claude de Villers and Dutel, the lapidaries Gracetti, Branchi, Horatio and Ferdinando, Mighorini and the tapestry-makers Jans and his son. These are but a few amongst the many employees of the manufactory, and to them must be added the artists who lodged in the Louvre and were under the control of the chief superintendent, such as the jeweller Bellin, the ebenist Charles André Boulle and the engraver Varin; whilst beyond his direct authority, though within the sphere of his activity, were yet other workers, whom we must not neglect to notice, such as Marot, Lepautre and Bérain." [1]

Jean Lepautre (born in Paris, died in 1682), and his brother, Antoine (1621–1691), had also great influence, particularly Jean. More than two thousand plates came from his hand. Lepautre's style by reason of his heavy

[1] André Saglio.

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forms much overcharged with ornamentation belongs rather to the period of Louis XIII. than to that of Louis XIV.

"Le Brun, pompous as he is, is less luxuriant in his decorative compositions than Lepautre, who proceeds directly from the Italians. A master carpenter himself, he supplied the models for most of the sculptors in wood of his day: the consoles, tables, settees and doors inspired by his designs may be counted by hundreds. All the furniture that he originated is heavy and powerful in form. His big tables destined to support heavy marbles are solidly placed on their feet, are rectangular and have heavy supports, — a noble style that probably appeared less heavy in the rich architectural surroundings in which they were placed." [1]

Domenico Cucci, an Italian designer, is little known except to the erudite; but the influence of his mind in the decoration of the royal palaces, and, consequently on the taste of the day was very great. The account-books call him "*ébéniste et fondeur.*" He was noted for his ornate ebony cabinets, ornamented with Florentine mosaic-work and superb bronzes that were made in the Gobelins foundry. Cucci also made decorative locks, door-handles, window-bolts, door-frames, garden-furniture, and even an organ case. It is more than probable that he was the author of some of the bronze ornaments for Boulle's furniture.

Filippo Caffieri, also an Italian, was a fine wood-carver. He came from Rome about 1660, and was employed to make furniture and picture frames for the royal palaces. He seems to fill a gap between the Italian style of Cucci and Le Brun. The folding-doors of the great staircase in Versailles, decorated with panels in which the sun, helmets, the royal monogram, chimæræ, cornucopias, laurel leaves and the lyre are carved, are his work.

[1] Molinier.

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PLATE XXI

Jacobean Court-Cupboard

Metropolitan Museum

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Caffieri made a great many *guéridons*, or tripod tables, carved arm-chairs and folding-chairs, most of which were intended to be gilded, silvered or lacquered.

This period is particularly distinguished by the furniture made by André Charles Boulle, who, like many others of the period, came of a family of decorative artists. His father and uncle were *menuisiers du roi* and had lodgings in the Louvre; and Boulle himself had several sons who continued his work after his long life of ninety years ended. Boulle's name is chiefly associated with — indeed is used to define — a special kind of marquetry composed of incrustations of metal and tortoise-shell on wood; but Boulle was not the inventor of it, as is sometimes claimed for him. Marquetry-work of this kind was made by the Italians who flocked to France under the rule of Mazarin, and was practised by Boulle's four sons and his many imitators who kept it in fashion during the second half of the Eighteenth Century. Work of this character was also ordered by the King from the Flemish cabinet-maker Alexandre Jean Oppenordt.

Boulle's furniture is excessively luxurious and harmonizes only in a rich setting. He made consoles, *armoires*, commodes, cabinets, tables, desks and clock-cases. His designs are heavy and generally taken from the Louis XIII. models; but they also are frequently in the newer taste. His commodes are often *bombé* and sometimes the upper part of his *armoires* swells into the large curve. Boulle was very clever in his use of bronze and copper ornaments. His console-tables and commodes are greatly admired. (See Plate XXVI.)

Father Boulle did an enormous amount of work and received orders from the King and numerous princes and other rich patrons. It would, however, have been impossible for him to have executed all the pieces attributed to

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his hand. The specimens in the Wallace Collection, the Louvre, the Mazarin Library, Paris and Windsor Castle, are authentic. Sometimes Boulle borrowed the models of Lepautre, Le Brun and Bérain. Cucci is thought to have been responsible for many of their ornamental figures in copper.

Boulle's official title was "*ébéniste, ciseleur et marqueteur ordinaire du roi.*"

"In the earlier furniture made by Boulle the inlay was produced at great cost, owing to the waste of material in cutting; and the shell is left of its natural color. In later work the manufacture was more economical. Two or three thicknesses of the different materials were glued together and sawn through at one operation. An equal number of figures and of matrices or hollow pieces exactly corresponding were thus produced, and, by countercharging, two or more designs were obtained by the same sawing. These are technically known as boulle and counter, the brass forming the groundwork and the pattern alternately. In the later boulle the shell is laid on a gilt ground or on vermilion. Sometimes the two styles are distinguished as the first part and the second part. The general opinion on the relative value of each seems to be that, while admitting the good effect of the two styles as a whole, the first part should be held in higher estimation as being the more complete. We there see with what intelligence the elaborate graving corrects the coldness of certain outlines; the shells trace their furrows of light, the draperies of the canopies fall in cleverly disordered folds, the grotesque heads grin, the branches of foliage are lightened by the strongly marked edges of the leaves, and everything lives and has a language. In the counterpart we can find only the reflection of the idea and the faded shadow of the original." [1]

[1] Havard.

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PLATE XXII

Marquetry Writing-Desk, Chinese Designs, Queen Anne Period (closed)

Metropolitan Museum

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We have seen that the French were slower than the Dutch to adopt Oriental design. Huygens, a Dutchman, was fairly successful in his efforts to imitate the real lacquer and exploited his discoveries in Paris. Before the end of the century there were three manufactories for furniture painted and varnished in the " Chinese style " one of which made " cabinets and screens in the Chinese style."

Lacquer-work on black background or red background and "*laques de Coromandel*" were also used for panels, armoires and for folding-screens.

Louis le Hongre and Martin Dufaux made paintings and varnished cabinets for Versailles; lacquered furniture was made at the Gobelins and "*objets Chinois,*" or "*objets Lachine*" were to be had in many shops.

Furniture now began to be affected: the forms remained European but the decorations often show an Eastern origin. " Certain models of decoration introduced in the midst of *rocaille* work are indeed copies of Oriental motives that are very well known. Chinese are the dragons carved on the feet of a beautiful console in gilded wood now in Fontainebleau, which M. Champeaux attributes to the epoch of Louis XIV., but which I would rather give to the Regency; Chinese is the dragon which forms the bronze crosspiece that decorates the shelf of a mantel-piece designed by Blondel; Chinese is the dragon decorating a *console d'applique* in gilded wood in the collection of M. Hoentschel; and, finally, I think no one would question the origin of the two exquisite handles of bronze which Cressent has placed on the commode in the Wallace Collection. These examples, which could be multiplied, will serve to show that if the *style rocaille* applied to a period of French art which rebounded through the whole of Europe is legitimate, it borrowed from Chinese art much of its charm and fantasy.

" The Louis XIV. Style did not disappear completely at

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first; but it dwindled away and became more delicate, the swelling curves more graceful though used with less reason, the introduction of decorative elements that artists of the preceding period had not found noble enough, and the abandonment of absolute symmetry greatly to the advantage of ornamentation but engendering always a sort of coldness which showed the poverty of invention. Gradually the aspect of the French style was changed: the monkeys and grotesque personages of Claude Gillot, the *espagnolettes* — those delicate female busts with coquettish faces — that seem to have been taken from Watteau's compositions, give to French Furniture a lightness and gaiety until then unknown. Notwithstanding all this, old traditions were not forsaken; the beautiful furniture of the Eighteenth Century continued to give importance to the bronze mounts, according to the traditions of Boulle; and the artist who was most in the fashion in the first part of the Eighteenth Century under the Regency — Charles Cressent — like all the *ébénistes* that were his contemporaries, even increased this taste for beautiful bronzes." [1]

In the second period of Louis XIV., dominated by Bérain, all the motives of ornament become more delicate and refined till the *style Louis Quatorze* merges into the *style Régence.*

It is to be noticed that the curve gradually appears on the legs of chairs and the transverse stretcher is supplanted by a bar.

Jean Bérain succeeded his father as draughtsman to the King. He is supposed to have been born about 1630. With his brother, Claude, the King's engraver, he issued a great number of designs for decorative panels, vases, candelabra and furniture of all forms. Molinier finds the arabesques of Jean Bérain very closely related to those of Jacques

[1] Molinier.

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PLATE XXIII

Marquetry Writing-Desk, Chinese Designs, Queen Anne Period (open)

Metropolitan Museum

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Androuet Du Cerceau, and considers André Charles Boulle, notwithstanding his first great talent, an imitator in composition of Bérain, just as Bérain is, on his part, a reflection of Le Brun.

"Bérain," says Mariette, "frequently gave to furniture ornamentation particularly appropriate for tapestry or to be painted on panels and ceilings; in short, what we call grotesques. From Raphael who had so happily imagined in the style of the ancients what appeared to him to have a good effect and subjected it to his own taste, so Bérain selected what would conform to the taste of the French nation and this idea succeeded so well that even foreigners adopted his style of ornamentation."

"Mariette's expression is perfectly just," adds Molinier: "he reduced to the French taste the artistic heritage of the past used by the artists of the Louis XIV. period; and this explains how it was that they created an original style that was soon adopted by all Europe."

Claude Gillot (1673–1722) was another who prepared the way for the Regency. His *singeries* are much in the style of Bérain; and having ignored all the serious, pompous magnificence of Louis XIV., they announce the joyous, fantastic spirit that his pupil Watteau was to carry even farther. The change was felt not only in the forms of furniture, but even in the bronze mounts and ornamentation; and some of the works that came from Boulle's workshop also reveal the new style. The curve is timid, but it is present.

The Style Refugié

In 1685, the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes induced fifty thousand families of the best French blood, intellect and craftsmanship to seek voluntary exile. The Huguenots took

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refuge from the *Dragonnades* in England, Holland and Germany; and those countries benefited by the short-sighted policy of a bigoted king. The goldsmiths, carvers, architects and designers and painters among the emigrants were so numerous that their subsequent work became known as the *style refugié*.

The most commanding figure in the band was Daniel Marot, a member of a family of French artists and a pupil of Lepautre, whose style he closely followed. William of Orange appointed Marot chief architect and minister of works and Marot designed many palaces and fine country homes, including the interior fittings, chimney-pieces, staircases, cornices, china-shelves, brackets and furniture. He also designed gardens. He accompanied William III. to England at the Glorious Revolution; and when William and Mary transformed Hampton Court into a Dutch palace, the work was designed and supervised by Marot and Sir Christopher Wren. Marot, indeed, designed most of the furniture, some specimens of which are still to be seen there. Hampton Court Palace was a perfect model of the *style refugié*. All the characteristics of Lepautre's pompous and massive taste are to be seen in Marot's work, together with the characteristic ornamentation of the Louis XIV. Style. His chairs and tables are supported on heavy legs connected by straining-rails, the seats and backs of his chairs and sofas are usually stuffed and upholstered; his mirror-frames are carved with scrolls, mascarons, shells, swags and chûtes of the bell-flower; the heads and arms of his caryatides and other female figures are functional as well as decorative; his clock-cases afford models for the future Chippendale, and, occasionally, the dawning Regency Style is apparent.

Marot was extremely prolific, too, in designing sumptuous upholstery in rich textiles for his bedsteads, chairs,

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PLATE XXIV

High Case of Drawers, Lacquered (1730–1740)
Metropolitan Museum

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screens, curtains and lambrequins. He made a great use of upholstery.

Marot's designs for rooms show the limit to which porcelain could be used as a decorative feature. In every possible place he introduced a bracket — over the doors, by the sides of the chimney-piece, and over the windows, he always has a little ledge for the support of a vase, a jar, or a cup. The chimney-piece, with its shelves, is particularly the show place for the valued Oriental curios. Some of his plates show brackets and shelves that support as many as three hundred articles, — all of which are so arranged as to belong to the scheme of decoration. It is not strange, therefore, to find evidences of the " Chinese taste " among his designs.

The mirror on Plate XXVII. is in the Marot Style. Here we have a square frame of walnut or some dark wood with gilded border and gilded ornaments. The pediment is of the graceful swan-neck, and between the scrolls is carved a cartouche. Another interesting piece of the period (see Plate XXVIII.), is a " show-table," dating from the time of William and Mary. The glass case is intended for the exhibition of curios. The stand is ornamented in the characteristic style of the day. The legs are decorated with the bell-flower and are connected by typical stretchers.

Marot worked through the short reign of Queen Anne (1702–1714). He died in 1718, four years after Her Majesty. Louis XIV. died in 1715. Therefore the Queen Anne Style may be described as a transitional one, partaking of the characteristics of the late Louis XIV. and the dawn of the Regency.

Was it not a Marot room that Addison had in mind when he described a Lady's Library in 1711?

" At the end of her Folios (which were very finely bound and gilt) were great jars of china, placed one above another in a very noble piece of architecture. The Quartos were sep-

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arated from the Octavos by a Pile of smaller Vessels which rose in a delightful Pyramid. The Octavos were bounded by Ten Dishes of all shapes, colours and sizes, which were so disposed on a wooden Frame that they looked like one continued Pillar, indented with the finest Strokes of Sculpture and stained with the greatest variety of Dyes. That part of the Library which was designed for the Reception of Plays and Pamphlets and other loose Papers, was enclosed in a kind of Square consisting of one of the prettiest grotesque Works that I ever saw, and made up of Scaramouches, Lions, Monkeys, Mandarins, Trees, Shells and a thousand other odd Figures in China Ware."

Among the other French exponents of the *style refugié* in England the names of Samuel Gribelin and J. B. Monnoyer should be mentioned.

During the long reign of Louis XIV. all the Stuart styles pass before us in England and her colonies. The Age of Oak is succeeded by the Age of Walnut. Mahogany begins its career; and new styles came in from the Low Countries, especially with William and Mary.

During the Seventeenth Century, the tendency of Dutch furniture was to break away from the heavy carved oak chairs and tables and massive bedsteads and constantly to become lighter in form, turnery supplanting carving in the posts of bedsteads and in the supports of tables, chairs and cabinets. A style of furniture now came into favor, particularly with the well-to-do middle class, that lasted half through the Eighteenth Century. A typical piece appears on Plate XXIX. The chest-of-drawers at first stood upon spindle legs connected by stretchers; and as time wore on upon the form of leg shown in the "high boy" on Plate XXIV. This early form of cabriole leg with the hoof foot was, in turn, succeeded by the cabriole leg with the claw-and-ball foot as shown in the two chairs on Plate XXX. These

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PLATE XXV

Louis XIV. Arm-Chair covered with Genoa Velvet
Metropolitan Museum

Chaise Confessionale, Transitional from Louis XIV. to Regency
Metropolitan Museum

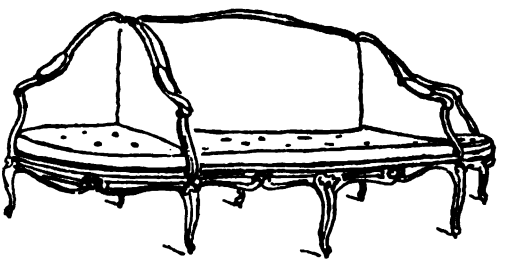
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are the starting point of a great family of chairs — those designated "crown-back" and "Hogarth" have no difficulty in showing their parentage. A little later in the century the jar-shaped splat was variously carved and pierced, the top rail variously waved and the feet terminated in the bird's claw clasping a ball which the Chinese say is taken from their dragon holding a pearl. This brings us to the so-called "Chippendale chair," which is conspicuously absent from Chippendale's book.

Louis XV. Style

The long reign of Louis XV. is broken into two periods, — the Regency and the *Louis Quinze* proper. In the first, grace, fancy and caprice are charmingly united. The scroll-and-shell, the monkey and motives taken from, or suggested, by Chinese and Japanese screens and jars, vases and fans were beautifully and ingeniously worked up by Gillot, Watteau, Huet and others. The two chief designers of the Regency and Louis XV. Style were Gilles Marie Oppenordt (1672–1742) who became architect for the Regent in 1715, and Charles Cressent (1685–1768). Oppenordt influenced Cressent with regard to general design and form, though Cressent remained closely linked all his life — which was unusually long — to the period of Louis XIV. It is supposed that he was a direct pupil of the famous Boulle; and in many respects he is a follower of that great master, —



CANAPÉ CONFIDENT, BY RADEL, 1765

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particularly in his great affection for the beautiful bronzes applied to the decoration of furniture, appreciating the splendid relief they give to the form and the great richness of decoration they bestow upon the surface.

Cressent was much influenced by the styles of Claude Gillot and Watteau, who were also infatuated with *le style chinois*. Cressent always remained true to himself; and although progressive — he was always seeking for lighter and more varied forms — he was one of those artists who retarded in interior decoration the new Classic style (destined to be known as the *style Louis Seize*) that had dawned and was already influencing architecture.

The artist in whom *style rocaille* reached its greatest development was Juste Aurèle Meissonnier (1695–1750), a native of Turin and a pupil of Boromini. When he crossed the Alps, the *style rocaille,* which originated in Italy, was already general in France; and Meissonnier was not the only one to push the fashion.

"He developed a style which was of Italian origin and very ancient, and the genesis of which was very complicated. This was already greatly advanced when Meissonnier arrived in France. He codified and strengthened these elements, thanks to his supple and charming genius, and to his talents as an architect; and he should not be held responsible for all the follies and weaknesses of his successors. However, it is certainly evident that around Meissonnier and two or three others — true masters of this genre — that a whole style of furniture and a whole system of decoration that held undisputed sway in France until about 1750 should be grouped." [1]

Meissonnier was an architect, an *ébéniste* and a goldsmith. In his plates, which were chiefly engraved by Huquier, he gives plans and elevations for buildings and designs for

[1] Molinier.

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PLATE XXVI

Commode by André-Charles Boulle
Wallace Gallery

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furniture, lustres, candelabra, *surtouts* for the table, scissors, sword handles, knobs for canes and many studies for vegetables and foliage. The *canapé* for the Count Bielenski and the salon furniture for the Princess Czartoryska are especially famous.

"The great Meissonnier had studied in Italy, and consequently was not one of us," says a writer of the day, "but as he had wisely preferred the taste of the Boromini to the wearisome antique taste, he had thereby come closer to us; for Boromini rendered the same service to Italy that we have to France by introducing there an architecture gay and independent of all those rules that were anciently called good taste. Meissonnier began by destroying all the straight lines that were used of old; he curved the cornices and made them bulge in every way; he curved them above and below, before and behind, gave curves to everything, even to the mouldings that seemed least susceptible of them; he invented contrasts, — that is to say, he banished symmetry, and made no two sides of the panels alike. Indeed these two sides seem to be trying to see which can deviate most and most strangely from the straight line." [1]

After the death of Meissonnier, Antoine Sebastian Slodtz (about 1694–1726), son of an Antwerp sculptor, became chief designer to the King. Slodtz had worked in Versailles and married the daughter of Domenico Cuffi. It was natural, therefore, that the many sons of this marriage should inherit artistic talent. Some became painters, some sculptors and some were successively designers to the King. They are supposed to have worked together, had great influence on the styles of the day; and executed many pieces for royal palaces. They were followers of Meissonnier.

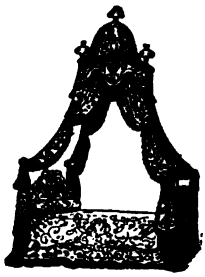
A large cabinet for medals and the *encoignures* now in the Bibliothèque Nationale, shows these brothers at their best.

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These pieces were made by the cabinet-makers Gaudreaux, or Gaudereaux, and Joubert, respectively. The *encoignures* are particularly fine.

We now come to Jacques Caffieri, the fifth son of the Caffieri in the employ of Louis XIV., "*sculpteur, fondeur et ciseleur du roi,*" whose work was distinguished by grace and aristocratic elegance. Caffieri seems to have directed the making of a great deal of cabinet-work, and he made a great deal of bronze work for Œben.

" Some critics, struck with the comparative soberness of the earlier works of Jacques Caffieri, in which he seems to be an admirer of Robert de Cotte, and with the unbridled imagination of his later productions, in which he greatly exceeds the audacity even of Meissonnier, have conceived the idea that the latter may be attributed to Philippe and may have been produced during the seven years that he survived his father. It is perhaps unnecessary to go so far for an explanation that is founded on no document. The Italian birth of the *ébéniste* of Louis XIV. is quite enough to account for the eagerness with which Jacques Caffieri took up the *style rocaille*, which gave full scope to his extraordinary dexterity. In the end, he used completely to cover over the furniture he produced with brass decorations; his beautiful commode in the Wallace Collection is of an almost austere simplicity compared with the bureau in black lacquer of the *Ministère de la Justice*, the drawers of which are disguised in a complicated casing of copper, whilst the supports down to the very feet are nothing but drooping masses of flowers; or still more compared with the famous table with a set of pigeon-holes owned by the Metternich family of Vienna surmounted by a perfect pyramid of rocks



LOUIS XV. BEDSTEAD

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PLATE XXVII

Mahogany and Gilt Mirror. Marot Style

Metropolitan Museum

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and figures and with complicated supports without any wood in them at all. It would be impossible to go further in this direction; the art of Caffieri was the culminating effect, the final flare-up of the lavish style of decoration encouraged by the patronage of Louis XIV. and Madame de Pompadour, which charms in spite of its complicated extravagance." [1]

M. de Champeaux has discovered that there were two *ébénistes* of the name of Œben — Jean François and Simon — that both were probably *ébénistes du roi;* that the Œbens were from Flanders or Germany; and, like Riesener, belonged to a little colony of German artisans who were attracted by the Austrian Queen and who settled in the Faubourg Saint-Antoine.

Œben was a pupil of Boulle and devoted himself chiefly to marquetry-work. His assistants, Caffieri and Duplessis, executed the metal ornaments. Œben's work was greatly liked by Madame de Pompadour. He died about 1756, and his widow married his foreman Jean Henri Riesener. Œben was responsible for the magnificent *bureau du roi*, which was finished by Riesener (see page 145).

Among the other designers and cabinet-makers, we may cite Nicholas Pineau, whose ornate pieces were often made by J. Dubois, Nicholas Petit, L. Boudin, Pierre Pionnier, Étienne Levasseur, the Migeons (father and son) and Sulpice, Loriot and Arnoult, famous for the mechanical devices they added to their tables, chairs, etc.

Nor must we forget the splendid lacquer-work of the Martin family. The Martins perfected a varnish so beautiful and so much like Oriental work that even Voltaire remarked:

"Et ces cabinets où Martin
A surpassé l'art de la Chine."

[1] André Saglio.

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One of the Martins received more than 10,000 livres for his work in the *Cabinet de la Dauphine;* and some of the magnificent boulle-work which Louis XIV. had had executed for his son was destroyed to make room for decorations in the Martin style on a green background.

In 1756 Martin worked in Versailles and was ordered by the King to paint Madame Victoire's room. The style was so much to the taste of Madame de Pompadour that she employed him at the Château de Bellevue under a salary and the long list of lacquered works that he produced there included *commodes, bureaux, encoignures* and tables.

Soon furniture painted in the "*Vernis Martin*" style in which the whole piece was decorated instead of being merely ornamented with panels, became the rage.

The Martin family was large. Robert (1706–1765) had four sons, two of whom, Jean Alexandre and Antoine Nicholas, followed their father's profession. Jean Alexandre Martin was one of the artists who decorated the Palace of Sans Souci, thus carrying his style into Prussia.

Carriages, sedan-chairs and sleighs were also decorated by the Martins; and, like every other piece by the Martins, bring enormous prices to-day.

In the reign of Louis XV. there was a great fancy for silver ornamentation, as well as gilded bronze; beautiful silver girandoles and lustres were made; rock-crystal was also used; and the passion for the porcelain of Saxony, Sèvres and Vincennes, as well as Oriental ware, did not abate in the least. Plaques were now often introduced into furniture. The tops of tables, *commodes* and *bureaux* were fitted with slabs of rare and beautifully colored marbles, as in the preceding reign; the chairs and sofas were covered in exquisite Gobelins, Beauvais and Aubusson tapestry; handsome mirrors adorned the panelled walls above the console-tables; the window-curtains were cut and hung in spirited

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PLATE XXVIII

Show-Table. William and Mary

Metropolitan Museum

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and charming folds, and gathered up into *choux* or knots; and colors were lighter and gayer than in the days of Louis XIV. Rich and heavy reds, greens and blues gave place to pale yellow, rose, delicate green and light blue.

On Plate XXXI. typical examples of this period are shown. The beautiful *encoignure* of black and gold lacquer, or rather gold figures on a black background, is signed J. Dubois. The *châtes*, leaf-shoes and frames of the panels of floral and *rocaille* designs are bronze. A Louis XVI. clock stands on the marble top.

The lady's table on the same plate is a dainty work of colored marquetry and ivory, forming pretty pictures that decorate all four sides. One of the three drawers is fitted up as a desk. A shelf between the legs is another convenience. The *châtes* and feet are of bronze and the open-work rails are copper.

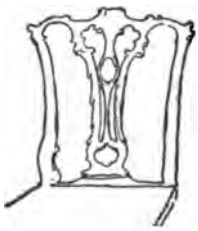
The chair shown on Plate XXXII. reveals the Louis XV. Style at its height. The curves are graceful and the frame is not excessively decorated. This piece, which is in the Metropolitan Museum, is covered with tapestry.

The Chippendale Style

Recent research has shown that there were three Thomas Chippendales. The first was a carver and picture-frame maker of Worcester at the end of the Seventeenth Century. His son, Thomas, the great Chippendale, was born in Worcester, and the father and the son settled in London about 1727. The latter became an eminent cabinet-maker and carver and in 1753 was established in St. Martin's Lane. In the next year the *Gentleman and Cabinet-maker's Director* was published. A second edition was published in 1759; and a third, in 1761, containing his famous designs for household furniture. In 1760, Chippendale was elected a

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member of the Society of Arts, whose members included Sir Joshua Reynolds, Edward Gibbon, David Garrick, Horace Walpole and John Wilkes. Thomas Chippendale II. died in 1799 and left four children, one of whom was a third Thomas, who also became a cabinet-maker and went into partnership with Thomas Haig. The firm of Chippendale and Haig lasted from 1779 until 1785.



CHAIR-BACK, CHIPPENDALE, 1754

In 1814, Thomas Chippendale III. opened a shop in the Haymarket and practically continued his father's business. Like his father, he was also a member of the Society of Arts. Chippendale III. did a great deal of work at Raynham Hall, Norfolk, in 1818–1819. He was also a painter and exhibited some pictures at the Royal Academy.

Returning to the second Chippendale, an authority says: "His book of designs attracted much attention, the public appreciated his work and seems to have bought largely, but the true greatness of his productions was not recognized until nearly a century after his death. It is a curious fact that the greater portion of the furniture bearing the impress of his genius, or known to have been designed and made in his shops, is not illustrated in any of the three editions of the *Director*. The elegant ball-and-claw foot which is seen so constantly in connection with his chairs and tables is conspicuous by its absence, nor does this design appear in any of the illustrated works published by his contemporaries. Furniture is now made for the most part in large factories, machinery taking the place of the skilled craftsman. Designers leave to others the execution of their ideas.

"There is much difference of opinion whether Chippendale was the first to introduce into England the style which bears his name, or was simply one of the craftsmen who best

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PLATE XXIX

Chest of Drawers on Stand. Anglo-Dutch

Metropolitan Museum

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succeeded in crystallizing and putting into concrete form the floating ideas fashionable at the time. Furniture of a specific school, known as Chippendale was executed all over the kingdom during a great part of the Eighteenth Century. A similar type of decoration was adopted by silversmiths, potters and engravers, and the English designs were widely imitated by contemporary craftsmen, both in our American and other colonies. In Ireland, also, much beautiful work was produced during the Chippendale period, and though no doubt based on the designs of the London makers, the Irish style of carving showed marked individuality. On the whole, it was heavier in design than the English and had a flatter surface." [1]

The plates in Chippendale's book are in three styles: the Louis XV., the Gothic, and the Chinese. He was a marvellous carver and revelled in all the ornaments of fancy. We find the Chinese mandarin, pagoda, umbrella canopy with bells, monkey's head, long-tailed, long-billed bird, shell, fret, endive leaves, rams' heads holding swags of leaves, squirrel, mascaron, spiky thorn, lions' heads, the serpent among flowers, subjects from Æsop and Grecian mythology, dolphin, wyvern, cocatrice, attributes of music, war, hunting, the bull's head, the caduceus and the C, which some people persistently say is his initial, when it is only the scroll of the Louis XV. period, a return of the old ear-motive (see page 32). The carver's greatest skill was lavished on mirror and picture frames, girandoles, pier-tables and brackets; his china-shelves and cabinets received great attention and his open-work chairs are as highly valued to-day as any of the Eighteenth Century. The designs in his book were chiefly intended to be carved and gilded or japanned and lacquered. He seldom mentions mahogany. Chippendale made great use of drapery, and designed elaborate festoons

[1] Constance Simon.

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and intricate mechanical devices for manipulating his curtains. Some of his furniture, which is labelled "French chair," or "sofa," he shamelessly took from Meissonnier, from whose books of design he appropriated bell-flowers, icicles, dripping water, cascades, leaves, feathers, shell-work and spiky thorns. As Matthias Darly, who engraved most of Chippendale's plates, lived much in Paris, the admirers of Chippendale may pin the thefts upon him, if they like.

Matthias Darly (or Darley) was a great friend of Chippendale's, and some critics think he had a very large share in Chippendale's designs. Darly formed a partnership with Edwards, and, with the latter, issued *A New Book of Chinese Designs* in 1754. At a later period Darly followed the classical taste as exemplified by the Adams and Pergolesi. Others of the Chippendale School are Ince and Mayhew, who, with their sons, continued in business until 1812, Thomas Johnson, Robert Mainwaring (famous for his elegant "Chinese Chairs"), Matthias Lock and H. Copland.

Two characteristic Chippendale pieces appear on Plates XXXIII. and XXXIV. The first is an arm-chair of extraordinary size and the second a sofa or triple-back settee.

In the first, the jar-shaped splat is pierced and carved with scrolls and foliage. The side supports are cut into fluting and piping, and the wavy top rail has reversed scrolls and foliage. The arms curve out boldly, ending in lions' heads and manes and foliage on the supports. The seat, which measures two feet nine inches in front, is slightly serpentine in front and the rail is carved with foliage and shell work which is carried round the sides. The cabriole leg ends in lions' feet and a mascaron issues from the foliage on the knee. The seat is covered with old English embroidery of large flowers and foliage in colored wools on linen.

The open-back mahogany sofa, or settee, of unusual design, has a three-chair back. The central panel, where a bird

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PLATE XXX

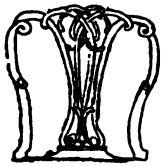
Anglo-Dutch Chairs

Metropolitan Museum

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sits among the entwined ribbons on the oak-branch, is carved differently from the others. Ribbons, leaves and oak-apples and the reversed C-scrolls form the rest of the decoration. The old crown-back is also suggested in the central back. The other two backs exhibit an intricate combination of ribbons, scrolls and foliage, and the top is wavy. The arms curve slightly outward and end in dragons' heads. The front rail of the seat is curved in festoons with shells at intervals among the foliage and a big mascaron in the centre. Richly carved cabriole legs with acanthus leaves and berries for ornamentation end in lions' feet. Opposite the spring of the knee is a reversed scroll. The two back legs end in the simple ball-and-claw foot. The covering is old English needlework representing large flowers in colored silks on a purple background. The whole piece is remarkably ornate and remarkably beautiful. It was once in the Dean Collection.



CHAIR-BACK BY CHIPPENDALE, 1754

Louis XVI. Style

Towards the end of the Louis XV. period, the general outlines of furniture become less carved and the straight line gradually asserts itself. Indeed, as early as 1760 some very straight, severe and heavy models appear, particularly those of Delafosse, and ultra-classic tendencies begin to predominate.

The general effect of Louis XVI. furniture lies in the almost exclusive use of the straight line. The curves that were so characteristic of the Louis XV. period gradually disappear, the rounded corners give place to the sharp angles and the curved, swelling leg becomes straight. The function of each part is plainly indicated; for instance, a

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foot is no longer concealed beneath a leafy scroll: it is a foot plainly seen; a drawer, or a door, is plainly indicated; and the handles that in the last period issued from dragons' tails, wings of birds, or spiky leaves, are banished for knobs, rings and rosettes. The construction of Louis XV. furniture was conceived from the point of view of the cabinet-maker and worker in wood; on the other hand, the Louis XVI. furniture follows the design of classic architecture — every object is separated into three distinct parts; and these different parts are outlined plainly with mouldings, beadings and other ornamental motives that are never found in the age of Louis XV.

Ornaments of the style of Louis XV. died hard, however; and we constantly find them upon pieces of furniture that show a very high development of the *style Louis Seize.*

Many different causes contributed towards a change of style. About 1748, the excavations at Pompeii and Herculaneum (discovered in 1719) were begun. Caylus published his *Récueil d'antiquités* 1752–1762; and Winckelmann his works on Greek art in 1754 and 1764. Another contributory influence was the publication of Piranesi's drawings of Etruscan, Egyptian, Greek and Roman architecture.

" Piranesi's work inspired many a founder, for example Thomire. As for the Egyptian Style, it is an error to believe that it originated in France after the expedition to Egypt. After this event, it is only just to note that it returned in favor; but towards the end of the reign of Louis XV. and during that of Louis XVI. this style flourished under the hands of the French artists. Gouthière chiseled figures in the Egyptian style for the Duc d'Aumont. The collections of antiquity engraved and published in France were quite sufficient to account for the flowering of a style, the dry and

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PLATE XXXI

Louis XV. *Encoignure* and Lady's Work-Table

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straight lines of which frame so well the strange idea that it was all developed from Greek and Roman art." [1]

The taste for the antique quickly took root, and was greatly favored by Madame de Pompadour.

The decorations and furnishings of Madame Du Barry's *Pavilion de Louveciennes,* moreover, were entirely in the new taste,—so much so, in fact, that modern criticism is sometimes disposed to call what has so long been called the *style Marie Antoinette,* the *style Du Barry.*

Gouthière, *doreur et ciseleur du roi,* worked here, and many of the charming pieces in the Jones Collection in the South Kensington Museum, give an idea of what was produced at Louveciennes. Jean François Leleu was another who worked for Madame Du Barry.

During this period the designers were fortunate in having such skilful artisans as Dugourc, Cauvat, Prieur, Forty, Carlin and Riesener to realize their compositions.

Many of the designers who became identified with the Louis XVI. Style had published works in the reign of Louis XV. One of these is Neufforge, a native of Liège. Among his productions are tables, *commodes,* sofas, cabinets, buffets, *armoires,* clocks, and consoles. Some of the designs are in the *style Louis Quinze;* but his works afford a complete view of the exterior and interior decoration of the *style Louis Seize.*

Another famous designer who overlaps the periods is Delafosse, who designed every kind of furniture and ornament, trophies and pastoral attributes, as well as ornamental devices in which musical instruments figure and attributes of painting, hunting, fishing, etc., etc. His sofas, chairs, beds, couches and settees are all in the newest taste of the day, so much so in fact that he is regarded as one of the leading exponents of the Louis XVI. Style. The "*genre de la*

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Fosse" is often used to designate both his productions and those of his followers.

Boucher, the son of the famous painter, was also a decorator whose designs for rooms and furniture give a correct idea of the Louis XVI. Style.

The artist in whose work we can best follow the evolution of the general lines of the furniture of this part of the Eighteenth Century is Jean Henri Riesener (1735–1806). One great interest in Riesener's furniture is that it exhibits the transition between the two styles of Louis XV. and Louis XVI.

Riesener's great forte was marquetry-work. Many models were furnished him by Jacques Gondouin (1737–1818), the architect and pupil of Blondel, who was a great lover of the Greco-Roman style. Gondouin was a designer for the furniture for royal residences. Riesener worked in both styles — the old and the new; and as Riesener did not die until 1806, he made a great deal of furniture. His most famous work was the *Bureau de Louis XV.* which he signed, but which was really begun by Œben. It is a cylinder desk in the shape that was new in those days, and it is decorated with magnificent marquetry and flowers and trophies of poetry and war. The splendid bronzes that adorn it, long attributed to Philippe Caffieri, were designed by Duplessis and Winant and were made by Hervieux. They include two bronze figures, Apollo and Calliope, who hold girandoles with two branches, a clock with figures of children, bas-reliefs and other ornaments. Riesener signed the work and dated it 1769 "à l'Arsenal à Paris." This is now in the Louvre.

Charles Saunier (made a master in 1752), was a contemporary of Riesener, and worked until the Revolution. He followed the styles of Riesener and Leleu.

The most fashionable *ébéniste* in the reign of Louis XVI.

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PLATE XXXII

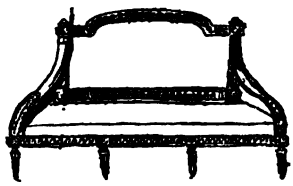
Louis XV. Arm-Chair

Metropolitan Museum

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was Martin Carlin, many of whose works are now in the Louvre. On account of his charming and dainty work and the delicacy of his profiles, Carlin is the embodiment of the "*style de la Reine.*" Carlin accomplished for Marie Antoinette what Gouthière had accomplished for Madame Du Barry. Jean Pafrat acquired fame by working with Carlin. Cabinet-makers made a great many pieces from the designs of Ranson, whose sofas, beds, ottomans, and seats of all kinds were in the newest style. Ranson was famous for his draped beds. He liked flowers and pastoral trophies and looped garlands and ribbons gracefully around a group of shepherds' hats, crooks, spades, trowels, and bird-cages. Garlands of roses among which birds bill and coo, or a quiver of arrows is hidden, often decorate the round or oval forms of his chairs.



SOFA BY DE LALONDE

De Lalonde's designs were especially popular. He considered nothing too trivial for his pencil, for among the plates of his thirteen books on furniture there are many locks and knobs for doors and rosettes for ceilings side by side with *commodes*, sofas, bookcases, chairs, beds, etc., etc. Many of De Lalonde's models were made for Trianon and Fontainebleau. De Lalonde shows all the popular motives of the day. He is particularly fond of the grooved leg, the leg bound with ribbons, the quiver, the lyre, the garland, the urn, the burning-torch and the ribbon. During the Directoire period, he slavishly followed the fashion and then merges into the Empire Style.

Nowhere is the *style Louis Seize* better shown than in the designs by Lequeu, whose beds look strange to our eyes with their columns formed of bunches of javelins and headboards decorated with quivers full of arrows at each corner.

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Lequeu is also addicted to thin vases with busts of Homer, Cicero or Socrates, festooned with garlands, and he likes the burning-torch. His sofas, smothered in drapery with festoons around their crown-shaped domes or canopies, are strikingly like Sheraton's.

Plate XXXV. shows two arm-chairs of the Louis XVI. Style at its height, before any influence of the Empire is felt. In Étienne Levasseur, the coming Empire Style asserts itself strongly. He created furniture in mahogany, surmounted by a gallery of open-work bronze, and *bureaux* and commodes in the form of a lower part of an *armoire*. His pieces greatly resemble those that were made in England at the end of the Eighteenth Century. Another *ébéniste* in whom the new Empire Style is strong, and who was the favorite at Court is Guillaume Benneman, who, with the aid of Thomire (a pupil of Gouthière), made probably the most important furniture ordered during the reign of Louis XVI.

The *commode* on Plate XXXVI. is an excellent example of late Louis XVI. It is of mahogany with three rows of drawers, the first row directly under the white marble slab adorned with a delicate frieze of bronze. The bronze handles of the drawers are also finely chiselled, as are also the locks and mouldings. The sides are grooved. The work is signed G. Benneman.

Upon the top stand two candelabra of bronze and white marble, the three lights being held by Cupids. These are of the same period. The statuette of Ganymede on the eagle with Jupiter's thunderbolts in his hand is of an earlier date.

Benneman was particularly fond of mahogany and his heavy pieces — some of his enormous *commodes*, etc., would be positively hideous were it not for the beautiful brass-work adorning them. Benneman's style is well exhibited in the two *buffets* in the Louvre, bearing the monogram of Marie Antoinette, and in the great *commode* in the same gallery,

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PLATE XXXIII
Chippendale Arm-Chair

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supported by lions' feet and ornamented in the centre with two cooing doves in a garland of flowers, above a Cupid's bow. Like Benneman, Joseph Stockel was a German, who also liked heavy forms. These two men form the next link in the development of style from De Lalonde.

Molinier considers the continued heaviness the fault of the Germans. He says: "Instead of aiding in its normal development and introducing into it new elements of vitality, the German *ébénistes,* of which Paris was full, stifled the growth of French furniture and the native artists had not the time fully to assimilate what the foreigners brought with them. The result was a very strange style, heavy in form, and in which very little of the true French taste of charm and elegance is to be found. Among the host of German artists we may note Schlichtig, Charles Richter, Gaspard Schneider, Bergeman, Feuerstein, Frost, Schmitz, J. F. Schwerdferger, and, greatest of all, Adam Weisweiller and David Roentgen."

Weisweiller made many pieces of extreme lightness and grace often adorned with Sèvres plaques. Roentgen was famous for his splendid marquetry in light colors and the mechanical devices he added to his furniture. The use of beautiful tapestry characterized this reign and delicate silks in which the feather was a favorite device. The great use of the stripe was also characteristic, and in the days of the *Directoire* it became a passion.

The Adam Style

Turning back to England, we may note that the taste was changing in the days of Chippendale's great fame; and it is not unlikely that furniture was even sent from his shop in the Adam taste. In Harewood House, the residence of the Earl of Harewood, many original bills and documents

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show that Chippendale worked there with and under Robert Adam. Much of the furniture still in existence was made by him and in the Adam Style, though occasionally a piece is found in his favorite rococo manner. In this house Rose, Zucchi, Rebecci and Collins were also employed; but Robert Adam was the decorative architect. Harewood House with this amazing combination, presents the best exhibition of the transition, between the *rocaille* as practised in England and the neo-classic style of the Adams.

Just as the French were tiring of the *rocaille*, so in England taste rebelled against what, for want of a better name, we may call the "Chippendale Style." To the architects Robert and James Adam, the change of style must be largely attributed. Attracted by old Roman architecture Robert Adam went to Nîmes in 1754; to Rome in 1756; and, with the French architect, Clérisseau, to Dalmatia in 1757. The remains of Diocletian's Palace at Spalatro gave him the models he wanted; and of this Palace he published a descriptive work with engravings by Bartolozzi.

In 1762, Robert Adam was appointed architect to the King; and, with James, designed a great number of houses in London, Edinburgh, Dublin, Bath, Glasgow and elsewhere in the United Kingdom.

"Most of the houses erected by Robert Adam were decorated and furnished from his own designs. The chimney-pieces, cornices, doors, chairs, tables, cabinets, mirrors, the wall-papers, chair-coverings, door-knockers — even once for the King, a counterpane — appear in his designs. No part of the house and nothing in its contents was too insignificant to be included in his sketches. Everything was carried out in the same style, a style which combined comfort with elegance.

"There is no doubt that Robert was greatly helped in his decorative work by Michele Angelo Pergolesi, who came

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PLATE XXXIV

Chippendale Three-back Settee

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over with him from Italy. Angelica Kauffmann, Cipriani, Zucchi, and Columbani also painted plaques and ornamental designs of many kinds. A great deal of 'Adam' decorative work is wrongly attributed to Angelica Kauffmann."

The lines of the furniture became more architectural than under the Chippendale period; and the ornaments suggested by the antique consist of festoons of husks or bell-flowers, thin swags of drapery, stars, medallions, rosettes, bulls' and rams' heads, wreaths, cupids, griffins, sphinxes, lozenge-shaped panels, knots of ribbon, caryatides, Greek, Roman or Etruscan vases and a radiating ornament such as a fan or the rising sun. "Plaques on which classical subjects were depicted by well-known decorative artists of the day were frequently used for the ornamentation of Adam furniture. Figure subjects were also inlaid and so delicately executed that at a short distance they appear to be paintings. Satin-wood was introduced into England from the East Indies about this period and added a new note of color to houses where mahogany or gilded furniture had so long reigned supreme. At first the new wood was mainly used for inlaying purposes. Adam is supposed to have employed Capitsoldi as well as other Italian and French metal workers for the making of gilt-bronze mountings. Occasionally the work was fine and delicate, but as a general rule metal ornaments on English furniture were not equal either in color, design, or execution to those of Gouthière and Caffieri in France." [1]



POLE-SCREEN BY ADAM

There is very little Adam furniture in existence. An Adam pier, or console-table, appears, however, on Plate XXXVII., of inlaid satin-wood and mahogany. The baluster and tapering, fluted legs are gilt, the frieze consists

[1] Constance Simon.

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of a band of pendant leaf-cups and trumpet ornament in beaded tongue outline, and the central decoration consists of an oblong panel of inlaid satin-wood, mahogany, and tulip wood painted with a medallion head in *grisaille* wreathed with laurel and festooned with a row of pink roses tied with blue ribbons. The semi-circular top is finely painted in rich colors with swags of flowers alternating with cameo medallion heads in *grisaille*, suspended from knots of blue ribbon. In the centre is an oblong panel with Phoebus in *grisaille*, in borders of arabesque foliage in orange and *grisaille*. The border of the top is inlaid with a scalloped band painted with festoons of drapery and trophies. The whole is trimmed with a narrow band of tulip-wood.

The Heppelwhite Style

The next style of importance is Heppelwhite that lasted from about 1785 to 1795. It seems that A. Heppelwhite and Co. stands for Alice Heppelwhite, the widow of George Heppelwhite, who soon after his death (about 1786) issued *The Cabinet-Maker and Upholsterer's Guide*, which passed through three editions (1788, 1789 and 1794).

Elegance and utility were the watchwords of this school; and it is notable that the firm did not claim to have originated their designs. In the Preface the Heppelwhites say "Our judgment was called forth in selecting some patterns as were most likely to be of general use, and in exhibiting such fashions as were necessary to answer the end proposed and convey a just idea of English taste in furniture for houses."

Heppelwhite furniture was made in mahogany or painted and japanned (a very different process from the lacquers of Vernis Martin). Heppelwhite was fond of inlaying and also carving. Perhaps of all his furniture, his chairs are

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PLATE XXXV

Louis XVI. Chairs

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the most famous; but his sideboards are much valued and his girandoles and mirror-frames are noted for their grace and delicacy. Many of Heppelwhite's tables contain mechanical devices, which at this date were so popular in France, and which Sheraton was going to take up. Heppelwhite was devoted to the straight leg with the "spade" foot; uses the bell-flower in swags or *chûtes;* the shell; the draped urn; the lotus; and the three feathers of the Prince of Wales. He also likes the festoon and tassel in drapery, and the stripe is his favorite seat covering, which shows that he was quite abreast of the French fads and fancies.

All of the Heppelwhite characteristics are shown in the desk on Plate XXXVIII. and the chair on Plate XL. The desk, it will be noted, has his favorite inlaid urn in the central door, his tambour-shutter that mysteriously disappears when pushed aside, his spade foot and his general air of lightness. The handsome mahogany chair has a shield back carved with the lotus and bell-flower.

Thomas Shearer

Thomas Shearer's plates are contained in the first two editions of the *Cabinet-Maker's London Book of Prices and Designs* (1778 and 1793), intended principally for the use of the trade.

"Shearer, however, had his limits, and they are strongly marked. No contemporary designer, not even Sheraton at his best, can be held to have surpassed him in the combination of daintiness and simplicity; but he was far behind both Sheraton and Heppelwhite in the application of the more florid form of ornament. What he possibly may have considered his *chef d'œuvre* is a sideboard, the first of its kind (so far as dated designs go) to be really a sideboard and not a sideboard table with drawers introduced.

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It may or may not have been the first attempt to combine a sideboard table and the pedestals and vases which went with it into one article, but it is certainly first as regards date of publication. Its interest, however, is more historical than artistic. It effectually disposes of the idea that we owe the sideboard proper to Sheraton "[1]

The sideboard on Plate LVI gives, like many of the designs of the period, two separate suggestions for patterns. Even the knife-cases that stand on the pedestals are equipped with different handles, so that the man who orders his furniture made can select exactly what pleases him. It is a typical specimen of Shearer at his best.

Shearer was also strong in tables. His style, generally speaking, resembles Heppelwhite, and Sheraton admired him so much that much of his style is founded on this somewhat neglected man.

The Sheraton Style

Thomas Sheraton covers two periods — that of Louis XVI. and the Empire, and consequently all the characteristics of each are found in his work. He seems to have followed the French taste very closely; but instead of using Sèvres plaques in his *commodes*, etc., he inserted compositions by Wedgwood. He restricted the use of mahogany to the dining-room, library, and bed-room; and for chairs with carved backs. His drawing-room furniture was white and gold; rosewood; satin-wood; or wood painted and japanned. Silk or satin designed with oval medallions or pretty stripes were used for the coverings of his seats. The cabinet, the *commode* and the secretary received much attention from his hands, and he designed most elaborate beds, draperies and dressing-tables. The

[1] R. S. Clouston.

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PLATE XXXVI

Louis XVI. *Commode*, by Benneman

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latter were often provided with tambour-shutters and ingenious devices for concealing mirrors and other toilet appliances. Pretty articles for ladies attracted his attention, and his combinations of work-table and writing-table, with tambour-shutters, or bags, are marvels of compactness and convenience. The cellaret sideboard was much developed by him and also such small articles as knife-cases, dumb-waiters and supper-trays received attention. In short, everything that the man of wealth, or his wife, or the butler within his gates could desire are found in his books. Sheraton used a great deal of brass ornament, in the way of handles, key-plates, claw-feet and rails, and also in the form of beading and thin lines of inlay. The lyre, the bell-flower, the festoon, or swag, the urn, the patera (the latter used to hide the joining of chair-frames and screws of the bed) are his favorite ornaments. His chair leg is often reeded or turned. One of his great accomplishments lay in veneering with satin-wood. Sheraton kept up with the taste of the day and condescendingly said that Chippendale's designs were "possessed of great merit according to the times in which they were executed" but were now "wholly antiquated and laid aside."



CHAIR-BACK BY SHERATON, 1791

No one would imagine that the designs in *The Cabinet-Maker and Upholsterer's Drawing-Book*, published in 1791, and those in *The Cabinet Dictionary* and *Sheraton's Encyclopaedia*, published in 1803 and in 1806–07, came from the same hand. The Empire influence is seen at its worst in many instances in the two latter; and instead of being somewhat redeemed by the fine bronze work of the French, the ornaments were carved in wood and gilded or colored in bronze green. Sheraton must have tried to please all tastes, for side by side with these abominations some very attractive models are to be seen.

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The chair on Plate XI. belongs to Sheraton's early period and is a splendid example of his work. Here the central splat consists of the draped urn. The open square back is of beautiful proportions. This chair and its companion are in the Metropolitan Museum, New York.

On Plate XLI. appears a Sheraton cabinet, which also belongs to his early period and is made of rich materials harmoniously brought together. Perhaps it would be better to classify it as a *commode.*

This piece is 6 feet 8½ inches long and of satin-wood, tulip-wood, hare-wood and painted panels. The central door, inlaid with trellis and rosette design, contains an oval panel of the Three Graces adorning a statue of Pan in a landscape. This was painted by Angelica Kauffmann. The sides are concave and are decorated with panels inlaid with vases of flowers in colored woods. The frieze, legs and feet are enriched with finely chased ornaments of *or moulu,* festoons of flowers attached to circular bosses, *paterae* mounts at the angles, and rosette and reeded and ribbon borders. The feet are *or moulu* representing acanthus foliage. The top is decorated with twelve circular medallions representing classical female figures painted by Angelica Kauffmann, encircled by two rows of inlaid husks; and above a semi-circular design of shells and husks in colored woods, brightened with mother-of-pearl, completes the decoration.

The chairs on Plate XLII. belong to Sheraton's later period and are the parents of the "Fancy Chair" that became popular at the beginning of the Nineteenth Century. These chairs have cane seats and the backs a rectangular panel of open trellis and rosette design in the centre. The top rail is painted. The turned baluster legs are also painted but in *grisaille.* A suite of this kind usually consisted of six chairs, two arm-chairs and a settee with quadruple back.

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PLATE XXXVII

Adam Console-Table and Top

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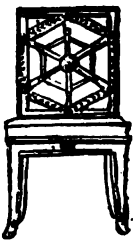
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The Empire Style

Very little of the furniture of the Old Régime would have survived the French Revolution had not the National Convention appointed a Commission of leaders in art to determine what objects should be preserved. The painter David and the cabinet-maker Riesener, served on this commission.

"Farewell to marquetry and Boulle," the people cried; "farewell to ribbons, festoons and rosettes of gilded bronze. The hour has come when everything must be made to harmonize with circumstances."

Every new piece of furniture was designed in sympathy with the politics of the day. There was a return to old Greek forms for chairs and couches; sacrificial altars were used for ladies' work-tables; and the beds were called "Patriotic," for the posts were formed of lances and upon the top of each was placed the Phrygian cap of liberty. Antique heads of helmeted soldiers and winged victories were omnipresent.



DIRECTOIRE CHAIR, 1793

The short-lived *Directoire Style* merged insensibly into the Empire Style. The Empire was proclaimed May 18, 1804; but the Style had long been on its way. Bonaparte's expedition to Syria and Egypt in 1796 naturally rendered the sphynx and other Egyptian motives popular; but they were not new to France.

On Napoleon's appointment as First Consul in 1799, when it was necessary for him to have certain palaces re-decorated, nothing was thought more appropriate than the newly developing style that was destined to receive the name "Empire."

Percier was responsible for the designs of the furniture.

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He followed the styles that the painter David had made the fashion; and the greater number of his designs were made by Jacob Desmalter, who is generally referred to as Jacob. The only charm and brilliancy of the sumptuous examples of the day are owing to their bronze-gilt ornamentations, and these fine decorations were made by Thomire. Many of them are very beautiful, representing figures, floral devices and classic ornaments.

Among other cabinet-makers who worked under the direction of Percier, and who were assisted by Thomire for the bronze sculpture and mounts, were: F. J. Pabst, Simon Mansion, J. P. Louis, J. A. Bruns, Marcion, and Lemarchand. It may be also noted that when Percier and Fontaine gathered together all their scattered plates and published their book on *Empire Furniture* in 1809, the Style had been nearly ten years in vogue.

Of course, the Style spread; for wherever Napoleon's brothers established a court they carried the new furniture with them. Even Joseph Bonaparte brought some splendid suites to America to furnish his home, *Point Breeze,* in New Jersey.

The imitators, who followed the heavy models of pier-tables, console-tables, sideboards, beds, chairs and sofas, deprived them of their brilliant ornamentation; and furniture grew ever heavier as the Nineteenth Century advanced.

The Empire Style was in high favor for about twenty years, and to-day it has its admirers. Many modern critics decry it, however. Thus Molinier writes:

"Only one thing allows us to pardon the furniture of the First Empire for its incoherence of form and decoration, and that is the excessive conscientiousness that presides over its execution: from a technical point of view the cabinet-work and the bronze-work are irreproachable. But

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PLATE XXXVIII

Heppelwhite Desk with Tambour Shutters

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at this point we should stop the eulogies that have been given too long to what may be called a caricature of the French style in the second half of the Eighteenth Century."

The form of the Empire furniture is cubic and rectangular. The carved figure of a swan often occurs on the arms of chairs, sofas, and sides of the beds. The enormous scroll is also much in evidence.

The Empire Style was not known by that name at the time it flourished: it was generally called the "Antique," and this was divided into separate classes: — Egyptian, Greek and Roman. Percier and Fontaine headed the school in Paris; but the man who did the most to popularize the taste for ancient design in London was Thomas Hope (called Anastasius). His *Household Furniture,* which completely revolutionized taste in England, appeared in 1805. The designs of Percier and Fontaine were not published until 1809. Hope had travelled extensively in the Levant, and was an enthusiastic admirer of "Egyptian Roman" design. He met with much ridicule, but had a big following. Another authority of the day was George Smith, who was "Upholsterer Extraordinary" to the Prince of Wales. In 1808 he published a book of designs that were frankly taken from the new French furniture fashions. His observations on the woods in use are interesting:

"Mahogany, when used in houses of consequence, should be confined to the parlor and the bedchamber floors. In furniture for these apartments the less inlay of other woods, the more chaste will be the style of work. If the wood be of a fine, compact and bright quality, the ornaments may be carved clean in the mahogany. Where it may be requisite to make out panelling by an inlay of lines, let those lines be of brass or ebony. In the drawing-rooms, boudoirs, anterooms, East and West India satin-woods, rosewood,

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tulip-wood, and the other varieties of woods brought from the East, may be used; with satin and light colored woods the decorations may be of ebony or rosewood; with rosewood let the decorations be *or moulu*, and the inlay of brass.



EMPIRE SOFA

Bronze metal, though sometimes used with satin-wood, has a cold and poor effect; it suits better on gilt work, and will answer well enough on mahogany."

On Plate XLIII. appear two chairs of the Empire Style: one French and the other English.

In 1806 we read in a fashion paper that there has been a change in interior decoration, "a style of furniture drawn from the florid Ionic" being substituted for the Egyptian. Movables of domestic use are now "designed after the purest Grecian taste." The writer goes on to explain that "a more grand and beautiful outline is adopted in the shape of each piece of furniture," and that "all mahogany furniture is now divested of inlaid ornaments. Chairs, sofas, tables, etc., used in drawing-rooms are all covered with gold or a mixture of bronze and gold." In the following year we learn that chairs and sofas are made after drawings from the antique in rosewood and gold, mahogany and gold, or black and gold, and that the windows are draped in the Grecian and Roman style, and that antique and Grecian lamps in bronze and *or moulu* are suspended from the centres of rooms or alcoves, while antique candelabra, with branches for many candles, stand on the rosewood and gold pier-tables and the chimney-pieces.

An English fashion paper, in 1807, mentions that "Antique candelabras, rosewood and gold pier-tables and the chimney-pieces, are most adapted to receive lights on which are introduced bronze and *or moulu* figures, etc., with

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PLATE XXXIX

Sideboard in the Style of Shearer

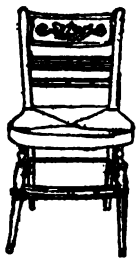
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branches to receive wax candles. The antique and Grecian lamps in bronze and *or moulu* are also suspended in the centre of rooms or alcoves. Window curtains of chintz, with Roman and antique draperies, and silk fringes, etc., to correspond, are truly elegant. Chairs and sofas still continue from drawings after the antique, in rosewood and gold, mahogany and gold, or black and gold."

Another fashion in the early days of the Nineteenth Century, which was much liked in this country, was a taste for the light "Fancy Chair" and "Fancy Sofa," which accorded well with the taste for straw matting, window-blinds, etc. In 1802 and 1803, straw matting, silk curtains, window-blinds and chinaware frequently come to New York from Canton. For instance, in 1803, King and Talbot, 14 Crane Wharf, receive "printed calicoes and chintzes, 950 Chinese chair bottoms, 100 boxes China ware, and 30 bundles of window-blinds." Checquered and straw-colored floor mats and Nankin mats and India hearth rugs and India straw matting are imported in 1803 and 1806; and "green window-blinds from China," "straw carpeting" and India straw matting come in 1809. In 1807, we also hear of India, Brussels and English rugs of Egyptian and Grecian figures and "Brussels and Venetian carpeting of different widths of the newest fashion in the Grecian and Egyptian style."



"FANCY CHAIR," 1810

The New York newspapers contain many advertisements of Grecian, Roman and Etruscan sofas, chairs and lamps; and it seems that many people of fashion abolished their handsome old ball-and-claw foot mahogany furniture for the *art nouveau* of the day, just as they destroyed their old trees to make place for avenues of Lombardy poplars. Washington Irving notes this in his *Salmagundi:*

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"Style has ruined the peace and harmony of many a worthy household; for no sooner do they set up for style, but instantly all the honest, old comfortable *sans ceremonie* furniture is discarded, and you stalk cautiously about amongst the uncomfortable splendor of Grecian chairs, Etruscan tables, Turkey carpets, and Etruscan vases. This vast improvement in furniture demands an increase in the domestic establishment, and a family that once required two or three servants for convenience now employ half a dozen for style."

In 1809, a decorator notes that "bronze still prevails as a ground-work for chairs, etc., and will always be classic when delicately and sparingly assisted with gold ornaments. A great deal of black has been used in chairs, etc., but the appearance is harsh and the contrast too violent to be appreciated by genuine and correct taste; its cheapness can alone make its use tolerable."

"Gothic," as then understood, began to assert itself about 1810, but does not seem to have become popular until after 1813, when a writer pleads for it, noting meanwhile that "in our own time the French style gave way to the Roman and that to the Greek; and then the Persian and the Egyptian were brought forward" but "failed to supersede those chaste models of harmony and truth."

As it made its way, decorators recognized it, as will be seen in the following dictum in 1817 of one who thinks that "Every part of the furniture in a room should accord, as few things are so disgusting to the eye of taste as the incongruous mixture which is often seen, even in expensively furnished houses, where the Grecian and Gothic, the Roman and the Chinese styles are absurdly jumbled together."

The rise of the new Gothic taste is interestingly accounted for by a writer in Ackermann's *Repository* in 1819, who describes some new designs for furniture. It is interesting

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PLATE XL

Heppelwhite and Sheraton Chairs
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to see what he calls "Gothic," and how he traces its development. As far as he is concerned, the Chippendale "Gothic" never had an existence. He writes:

"The annexed examples are of the unsystemised art, which is often called Gothic, but which should properly be termed Tedeschi, or old German, being of the style which was substituted for the Greek and Roman forms of the purer ages. The Italians, to designate this perversion of art, called every departure from the genuine models by the name of Gothic, although widely differing from the style adopted by the Saxons and Goths; and left it to later times to give names to each particular style that the feeling and genius of any people might cultivate.

"The style of furniture exhibited prevailed in the mansions of the first rank in Germany in the Fifteenth Century; and although a purer taste has succeeded from the high cultivation of art in that country, yet its fitness and correspondence to some of our own ancient buildings render the annexed examples of genuine Tedeschi furniture very desirable."

There was a great rage for drapery during this period. The draped sofa remained in fashion, and the fashion papers publish new designs for curtains in nearly every issue. In 1816, one of them says:

"Perhaps no furniture is more decorative and graceful than that of which draperies form a considerable part; the easy disposition of the folds of curtains and other hangings, the sweep of the lines composing their forms, and the harmonious combinations of their colors, produced a charm that brought them into high repute, but eventually occasioned their use in so liberal a degree as in many instances to have clothed up the ornamented walls, and in others they have been substituted entirely for their more genuine decorations, by which the rooms obtained the air of a mercer's or

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a draper's shop in full display of its merchandise, rather than the well imagined and correctly designed apartment of a British edifice: indeed, to so great an excess was this system of ornamental finishing by draperies carried, that it became the usual observation of a celebrated amateur in this way, that he would be quite satisfied if a well-proportioned barn was provided, and would in a week convert it, by such means, into a drawing-room of the first style and fashion. So long as novelty favored the application, this redundance was tolerated; but time has brought the uses of these draperies to their proper office of conforming to the original design, consisting of those architectural combinations that possess a far greater beauty, dignity and variety than draperies are capable of affording."

Another writes in the same year:

"In fashions as in manners it sometimes happens that one extreme immediately usurps the place of the others without regarding their intervening degrees of approximation. For the *précise* in dress the French have adopted the *dishabille;* and it has been applied to their articles of furniture in many instances, giving to them an air which the amateurs term the *négligé.* In the annexed plate the design of a *lit de repos,* or sofa bed, has a peculiar character of unaffected ease, and is not without its full claims to elegance. The sofa is of the usual construction, and the draperies are thrown over a sceptre rod, projecting from the walls of the apartment: they are of silk as is the *courte-pointe* also."

A suite of draperies for a bow window in 1819 "are fancifully suspended from carved devices relating to vintage and the splendors of the year; indicative of which, the central ornament is a golden peacock, whose displayed plumage being delicately colored in parts so as to imitate the richness of its nature, the effect is considerably increased. The swags are arranged with an easy lightness and the fes-

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PLATE XLI
Sheraton Dwarf Cabinet and Top

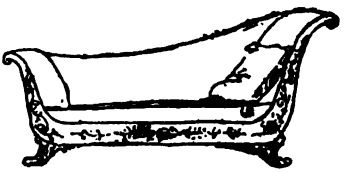
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toons with unusual variety of style and form; they are comprised of light blue silk and lined with pink taffeta."

Mr. Stafford of Bath gives, in 1819, "an elegant drapery of light green silk and pink taffetas linings; the sub-curtains are of clear muslin. The festoon draperies are supported by the eagle of Jupiter embracing the thunderbolt by arrows which have pierced the wall and by termini of foliages: these draperies are decorated by an embossed *appliqué* border which forms double rows upon the festoons and divides the curtains from the extreme supports over which it falls, as if suspended by them; the curtains are also bordered by a silk open fringe."

In 1820, Mr. Stafford designs some curtains that he describes as "playful swags of blue relieved by buff sub-curtains." Beneath them hang long white "under curtains." A "Paladian window," also of his invention, is draped in blue and lilac silk and taffetas with gilt carved supports, gold-colored lines, tassels, fringes and trimming and white transparent under curtains. The leading drapery is blue.



MÉRIDIENNE, 1820

During the Restoration of the Monarchy, which lasted from 1815 to 1830, a distressing amount of fine old furniture was destroyed to make way for the cumbrous and heavy models that followed the general style of the Empire, with sabre legs and scrolled arms and feet and general heaviness. This period of mahogany and rosewood was succeeded by the "comfortable" period, when the seats consisted solely of upholstery and showed no wood-work. The soft-tufted sofas, easy-chairs, *tête-à-tête pouf* and *borne* are still within the memory of the present generation and are constantly met with in out-of-

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the-way and old-fashioned hotels, on both sides of the ocean.

Simultaneously with the craze for upholstered furniture, French cabinet-makers had been trying to revive old types and models. Gothic forms and ornamentation were revived and then the Renaissance held its sway for a time. The artisans copied badly, but even bad copies helped the taste; and about 1850, excellent furniture, particularly chairs and sofas were made in the *style Louis XV.* and the *style Louis XVI.* The strange jumble that followed the Empire is sometimes referred to as the *style troubadour.*

A revival of the Louis XV. scrolls and curves, but with less character and restraint than the original, also took place and finally what is known as *baroque*[1] or debased rococo took the field, when ornaments were prolifically used for the sake of display rather than for appropriate adornment.

From 1830 to 1850, fine arts were a passion in France, as well as a fashion. The wealthy collected paintings, and those in moderate circumstances followed suit; then, from 1840 to 1860 music reigned supreme, and no drawing-room was considered furnished without a piano.

After that period the rage for general collecting began, and houses were filled with curios of all kinds. The cabinet and the series of shelves known as the *étagère* descended into comparatively plain homes.

Of late years the return to good styles of old periods has been far more marked than the support of *l'art nouveau.*

Side by side with debased Empire forms, in England,

[1] The word baroque, which became a generic term, was derived from the Portuguese "barrocco," meaning a large irregular-shaped pearl. At first a jeweller's technical term, it came later, like "rococo," to be used to describe the kind of ornament which prevailed in design of the Nineteenth Century, after the disappearance of the Classic. (Litchfield.)

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PLATE XLII

Sheraton Chairs

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we find so-called "Gothic" furniture in fashion publications, such as Ackermann's. Most of this was very poor stuff, from an artistic point of view. There was great improvement after 1835, when the famous architect, A. W. Pugin, published his *Designs in Gothic Furniture.*

There was probably no period so dull and deathlike in furniture as the half century following the Empire. The best work that European cabinet-makers could produce, as shown in the Great Exhibition of 1851, reveals how the mighty had fallen; and the English display was very pitiful. During this period household furniture was made principally of mahogany, and rosewood, and the dining-room and sitting-room pieces were heavy and generally ugly. Great sideboards with mirrors let into the back; tomblike desks; console-tables in the form of a heavy lyre; sofas with enormous scrolls and with horsehair covering; chairs with the sabre leg; Trafalgar chairs; enormous bookcases; pillar-and-claw dining-tables; tripod tables with marble slabs; and French bedsteads with heavy foot and headboards of the same size are the favorite forms of the Victorian age. It seems incredible that furniture of the Chippendale, Heppelwhite and early Sheraton periods should have been turned out of old homes for mahogany worked into such clumsy and repulsive forms — furniture which frequently masquerades to-day under the name of "Colonial," and which accords with what M. Molinier aptly describes as "the horrible simplicity of prison architecture."

As a matter of fact, there was no distinctive style at this period: everything was a jumble. Describing York House, which had just been magnificently furnished in 1841, a writer says: "The furniture generally is of no particular style, but, on the whole, there is to be found a mingling of everything, in the best manner of the best epochs of taste."

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One change was noticeable, however, in the ottoman, couches and *causeuses:* "Some of them, in place of plain or carved rosewood or mahogany, are ornamented in white enamel, with classic subjects in bas-relief of perfect execution" a critic notes.

Papier mâché was used in the manufacture of many articles of furniture, and was very popular about the middle of the century. It had long been known, but came into favor about 1825, when we read:

"A different style of decoration has lately been introduced from France by the manufacture of a composition of paper into every species of ornament, whether for the walls of an apartment or interior decoration in general. This species of manufacture has been called *papier mâché*, which in fact is nothing more than paper reduced to paste, and then forced into moulds of the form required. In this instance we now excel our inventive neighbors in the execution of the same article; the English manufacture being more durable as well as more imitative of real carved work, from its sharpness of edge and depth in cast. But with respect to the elegance and phantasy of design in paper decoration, the French offer patterns very far superior to all others."

Reviewing the furniture of the period, Litchfield says:

"Large mirrors, with gilt frames, held the places of honor on the marble chimney-piece, and on the console, or pier-table, which was also of gilt stucco, with a marble slab. The chiffonier, with its shelves and scroll supports like an elaborate S, and a mirror at the back, with a scrolled frame, was a favorite article of furniture.

"Carpets were badly designed, and loud and vulgar in coloring; chairs, on account of the shape and ornament in vogue, were unfitted for their purpose, on account of the wood being cut across the grain; the fire-screen, in a carved

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PLATE XLIII

Empire Chair (English)
Metropolitan Museum

Empire Chair (French)
Metropolitan Museum

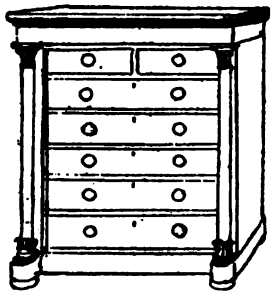
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rosewood frame, contained the caricature, in needlework, of a spaniel, or a family group of the time, ugly enough to be in keeping with its surroundings.

"The dining-room was sombre and heavy. The pedestal sideboard, with a large mirror with a scrolled frame at the back, had come in; the chairs were massive and ugly survivals of the earlier reproductions of the Greek patterns, and though solid and substantial, the effect was neither cheering nor refining.

"In the bedrooms were winged wardrobes and chests of drawers; dressing-tables and washstands, with scrolled legs, nearly always in mahogany; the old four-poster had given way to the Arabian or French bedstead, and this was being gradually replaced by the iron or brass bedsteads, which came in after the 'Exhibition of 1851' had shown people the advantages of the lightness and cleanliness of these materials.



"DRESSING-ROOM COMMODE," 1826

"In a word, from the early part of the present century, until the impetus given to Art by this great Exhibition had had time to take effect, the general taste in furnishing houses of all but a very few persons was at about its worst.

"In other countries the rococo taste had also taken hold. France maintained a higher standard than England, and such figure work as was introduced into her furniture, was better executed, though her joinery was inferior. In Italy, old models of the Renaissance still served as examples for reproduction, but the ornament was more carelessly carved and the decoration less considered. Ivory inlaying was largely practised in Milan and Venice; mosaics of marble were *spécialtiés* of Rome and of Florence, and were much

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used in the decoration of cabinets; Venice was busy manufacturing carved walnut-wood furniture, in buffets, cabinets, negro page boys elaborately painted and gilt; and carved mirror frames, the chief ornaments of which were cupids and foliage."

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PLATE XLIV

Table and Chair, by Duncan Phyffe, owned by Mr. R. T. Haines Halsey, New York

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II

CHESTS AND CUPBOARDS

THE CHEST; THE ARMOIRE; THE DRESSOIR; THE COURT-CUPBOARD; THE SIDEBOARD; THE BUFFET; THE CABINET; THE COMMODE; THE BUREAU.

THE CHEST

THE treasure chest, or *arca*, was an important piece of furniture with the Romans and usually stood in the atrium, or hall, of the Roman house. It was often fixed to the floor, or against the wall, and was under the charge of the doorkeeper who kept the key and paid the housekeeping expenses from it. If not made of iron, this strong-box was of hard wood, strengthened with bands and studs of bronze or iron. Chests of this description have been discovered at Pompeii.

In the predatory Dark Ages, the chest or coffer was of supreme importance. All classes lived an uncertain life and people were frequently compelled to move and to travel; therefore, the chest, coffer, trunk, *bahut, huche, arche,* or strong-box was a prime necessity.

The earliest chest, or travelling trunk, of Western Europe was made of wicker and covered with an ox-hide; and sometimes the wicker case contained an inner box of wood. In the course of time, the wicker case was given up and the wooden box alone was used, and this was rendered secure with a lock and iron bands. As the chest was exceedingly heavy, it was provided with iron handles, or rings, through which a pole could be passed; and the chest, thus slung from the pole, was borne on men's shoulders.

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The heaviest chests were placed on strong carts drawn by oxen, and the less heavy ones on the backs of strong sumpter horses that were called in France *chevaux bahutiers,* from the *bahut.* Solidity was the first qualification; and therefore the early chests were ponderous, massive, and covered with iron bands or straps; but towards the end of the Middle Ages when the chest was used for a variety of purposes, it was embellished with ornaments. The arched top was found inconvenient when the chest became a piece of furniture rather than a travelling-box. The ordinary chest of this period was a long coffer that stood on four short, stout feet, or upon the end pieces prolonged below the front and back. The chest proper was therefore raised a little above the floor. The wood was painted, carved or gilded; covered with leather, or ornamented canvas; and made strong with wrought iron bands that were both decorative and useful.

Such chests were in constant use for an infinite variety of purposes. They formed seats on which the merchants sat and sold their wares and paid and received their monies. In the illuminations of some manuscripts such chests are employed for the musicians to sit upon while they play their instruments to the guests in the hall, or ladies, while they spend their long, solitary hours working tapestry or embroidering. A miser also is seen to sleep upon his chest which contains all his worldly wealth. In fact, they formed an indispensable article of furniture in all the chief rooms of the Mediæval house, serving, like modern safes, to keep gold and silver articles, jewellery, papers, books, deeds, parchments, wearing apparel of all kinds, as well as for the hangings of the rooms when not in use. Chests were often so constructed that they could also be used for couches and beds.

"In the Thirteenth Century, the ornamental iron-work began to be supplemented by simple carving on the wood itself, and the old system of covering every joint and seam

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PLATE XLV

Carved Oak Chest. Early French Renaissance (about 1500)
English Transitional Chest (about 1500)
Metropolitan Museum

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with an iron band, so that the whole of each side presented a nearly plain surface, began to give place to a more scientific and less primitive mode of construction, viz., by forming the sides, ends, and flat lid into panels, and in setting these into a stout framework of stiles and rails. A change in construction led necessarily to a change also in the method of ornamentation, and the decoration which had formerly been confined to the terminations of the iron bands, painted leather or canvas coverings, was now followed by mouldings wrought on the angles of the framework, and all kinds of beading and incised carving.

"In the Middle Ages, the chest-makers formed such an important body of artificial workmen that they divided themselves in most of the principal towns from the guilds of carpenters and formed a special guild of their own. Such guilds were highly favored and became powerful, their members attaining to the very highest skill, and besides the business of chest-making, they worked in ebony, ivory, and all kinds of precious woods, as well as in horn and shell; in fact they ranked next to the gold and silversmiths amongst the trade guilds of the period. So much were the trunks, bins and chests in use as articles of furniture among all classes that they found it necessary to make supplementary laws in order to prevent them from turning out faulty work." [1]

The chest appears in old wills and inventories as *kyst, kyste, kist, kyrst, kiste, chist, chiste, cheste, cheist, ark, coffer, almery, press* and *casket.* It is often described as "bound with yren," a "bound kiste," a "spruce kist" (meaning a fir chest) and a "Flanders," or "Flemish," chest. The chest of the Low Countries was always a prized possession, not only in France and England, but in Spain and Portugal.

[1] Charles Clement Hodges.

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One of the earliest, finest and largest carved Flemish chests in existence is preserved in the vestry of Alnwick Church in England:

"The front has the usual division of three compartments, two uprights and a centre piece. The uprights are each divided into four panels, the three uppermost of which on either side are carved with dragon-like monsters, some with wings and some without. All their tails run off into several branches bearing beautifully wrought leaves of various kinds, conspicuous among which is the trefoil in the uppermost right-hand panel. The lower panels are occupied with scrolls bearing leaves of the strawberry type. The centre is divided vertically into three, the upper division being divided into three again by the lock-plate. On either side of this a chase is represented, the animals facing towards the lock. The lower compartments each contain two dragons, ending in foliated branches and with foliage between them. The two lower dragons have human heads and wear jester's caps. The character of the foliage and the entire absence of any architectural features in the design of this chest, place it in the first quarter of the Fourteenth Century.

"Many ancient chests are still to be found in the chapter-houses and vestries of ancient churches, where they were receptacles for vestments, hangings for festival decorations and the preservation of archives, deeds, etc. A good example of the Thirteenth Century was formed of oak planks, two inches thick. The uprights clamping the sides are unusually broad, exceeding the intervening space. Its only decoration is constructive, consisting of iron straps one and three-quarter inches wide and one-eighth of an inch thick. These are admirably distributed for gaining the greatest possible result, both from a constructive and decorative point of view, with the least amount of material. The two

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PLATE XLVI

Sixteenth Century Italian Marriage Coffer

Cluny Museum

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bands crossing the lid also descend the back and form the hinges. All the bands terminate in bifoliations, and the tip of each bifoliation is secured with a mushroom-headed nail. The front is distinguished by two bands crossed which form the heraldic cross moline, but it is here no doubt decorative. The ends are furnished with chains and rings, which could be raised above the lid for slinging the chest on a pole." [1]

The most famous of all Fourteenth Century chests is in the Cluny Museum and is represented on Plate I. (see page 9). About this time chests were decorated with the black and white inlay in geometrical designs that was known as *certosino* chiefly made in Italy and Portugal. Pictures in colored woods were often called *tarsia* (see page 11).

It was in the beginning of the Fourteenth Century that the richly carved chests were introduced; for plain chests and iron-bound chests were not in accord with the rich furniture and panelled walls with which the interiors were now adorned.

Coffers and chests of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries were in most instances of fine proportions, ingenious in their interior arrangements and characterized by rich carving that reveals the various developments of Gothic tracery. The locks and keys were often most intricate in design and artistic in workmanship.

The panels of the chests were much decorated with the favorite linen-fold design.

In the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries, the so-called "Tilting Coffers" were produced. Their dates are determined by means of the style of armor in which the figures ornamenting the panels are dressed. Architectural motives are carved on their frames and knightly contests are represented on their front panels. A famous example from the Cluny Museum appears on Plate II. (see page 10). South

[1] Charles Clement Hodges.

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Kensington Museum owns a small one upon which two knights are tilting furiously and one in the Ypres Cathedral shows St. George fighting the Dragon.

In France, the chest with the rounded top was called *bahut* and that with the flat top, *huche.* The chest was the most important piece of furniture in the house, and in it valuables were kept. In fact, the kings and princes of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries gave the name *Garde-huche* to the officer in charge of their table-silver, or, as we should call it, the silver-chest. In this, the French followed the precedent of the old Romans.

The *huchiers* were a guild apart from the carpenters and made all the fine woodwork of the house — such as the doors and window-frames. *Maîtres-Huchiers-Menuisiers* was the title Mazarin gave them in 1645.

A favorite way of decorating chests and coffers in Italy in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries was known as *gesso duro.* This was a preparation of whiting mixed with size or glue and spread thinly and evenly over the surface of carved wood or modelled ornaments. The raised ornaments were then painted and gilded. *Gesso* was also much used as a decoration for the Spanish chests of the Fifteenth Century, which are now so rare.

The large chests used in Spain were similar to those of Italy and were decorated with Gothic or Renaissance carving like the choir-stalls and ornamented with iron-work. In the province of Cataluña, they were inlaid with ivory in imitation of Florentine and Milanese work.

Late in the Fifteenth and during the Sixteenth Century, Italy produced most elaborate and sumptuous coffers; and upon the marriage coffer, or *cassone,* both artists and artisans bestowed their best energies. The bride's dower was carried to the bridegroom's house in the *cassone,* which varied in sumptuousness according to the wealth of the

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PLATE XLVII

Sixteenth Century Italian Marriage Coffer

Louvre

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family. Some of the chests were of carved wood; some were inlaid; some were covered with velvet ornamented with richly gilt metal-work; the handsomest of all were painted by such celebrated artists as Andrea del Sarto. In fact, some of the most beautiful Italian pictures that have come down to the present day were originally panels for marriage-chests. Gozzoli's *Rape of Helen* in the National Gallery, London, is one of these.

The marriage-chest sometimes bore the inscription "*Quae nupta ad cerum tulit maritum.*"

"It was in such a marriage-chest that the beautiful Genevra dei Benci, whose portrait exists in the fresco by Ghirlandaio in Sta. Maria Novella, hid while playing hide and seek the evening before her marriage. The *cassone* was of carved wood and the heavy lid closed upon her, snapping the lock fast. All search for her was in vain, and the old tale says that her fair fame suffered at the hands of malicious women, jealous of her exceeding beauty. Years afterwards, when the chest was forced open, the remains of the lovely Genevra were found, still, it is said, preserving traces of beauty, and with the peculiar scent she used still lingering about her long, fair hair; in her right hand she grasped the jewel her bridegroom had given her to fasten the front of her gown. In Florence the *bella Genevra* is still talked about among the common people as the ideal type of woman's beauty." [1]

A fine example of Venetian work of the Sixteenth Century is the marriage-chest from the Cluny Museum, on Plate XLVI. The front and sides are beautifully carved with mythological and Biblical subjects relating to marriage, and ornamented with chimerical figures, mascarons and shields in high relief. Trophies and garlands adorn the frieze, and at the corners are large female figures with ex-

[1] J. Ross.

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tended wings. In the centre is the richly framed shield. The human forms are carved with the utmost grace and delicacy. Another marriage-chest appears on Plate XLVII. This is of Italian workmanship and is preserved in the Louvre.

Compare these with the chest on Plate XI. of the same period with its graceful female figures supporting the central shield and terminating in leafy scrolls that frame chimerical beasts and birds. This fine piece of the Italian Renaissance is in the Metropolitan Museum, New York.

Cuir bonilli was also much used as a covering for chests and coffers in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries in place of carving. The leather was first prepared by being steeped in melted wax and essential oils or spirits, and boiled; and after the leather was thus prepared, it was delicately embossed and incised and painted and gilded. Sometimes, too, the leather was cut away and pieces of velvet or other rich materials were laid underneath the leather in the spaces, for the sake of the bright effect. Of course, the carver made use of the leather-straps for a motive. The *cuir*, variously cut and plaited, or interlaced, was a decoration that found particular favor with the Flemish. The strip of leather sometimes flat and sometimes rolled, was often accompanied by birds, flowers, animals and fruits. (See Plate XLVIII.)

The coffer, or chest, of the Sixteenth Century was as a rule made with a flat top. The wood was oak, walnut, or lime. It had been the principle in decoration to divide the anterior into a certain number of arches; in the second half of the Sixteenth Century panels took their place divided from one another by caryatides. Some coffers were made with the swelling front — especially those of small size — and decorated with marquetry and fine inlay work of white paste "*à la moresque*," a style of decoration that was used

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Plate XLVIII

Sixteenth Century Carved Chest. Lyonnais

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also for the *dressoirs, armoires* and chairs by the *huchiers* of Lyons.

In the Sixteenth Century the chest in the Low Countries was decorated with panels carved with subjects from the Bible, Greek myths, allegorical subjects, architectural motives, arabesques, pilasters in the form of terms, mascarons, fluted columns and niches filled with figures. Flemish chests were in great demand in France, England and across the Pyrenees.

The chest was always found in the Dutch home in the Seventeenth Century. One or two large chests invariably stood in each bedroom and in these both linen and clothing were kept. Many Dutch chests were made of lignum-vitæ or *sacredaan* fastened with brass or silver locks and hinges. The Dutch chest was generally neatly lined with linen. One reason that the yellow *sacredaan* was a favorite wood for chests was because its sweet, strong odor was hateful to moths.

The word *coffre* was also used in France to describe the wooden case, ordinarily covered with ornamental leather, fastened with large silver-headed nails, and also those made of various kinds of wood variously decorated. *Coffres de Chypre* were ornamented with mother-of-pearl inlay and were often very rich; those termed *à la néapolitaine* were of ivory marquetry on a background of walnut. Those of Flanders were, as a rule, strengthened with metal bands, or ornaments.

The smaller chests, coffers and caskets varied much in shape and material and were made in gold, silver, ivory, mother-of-pearl, and were variously carved, ornamented with precious stones, or chased, or enamelled on copper. They were used for locking up jewels and other small valuables. Handsome dressing-boxes were also made in this form.

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For the sake of greater convenience, the chest was placed on a frame that rested on short, square legs, or flattened ball feet. The next development consisted of one long drawer, or two short drawers, below the chest proper. As more drawers were added to the simple box or trunk, the original chest became extended into a chest-of-drawers, a nest-of-drawers, a case-of-drawers, a chest-with-drawers, a press, a cupboard-press, a chest-upon-chest. The simple chest is, therefore, the parent of many pieces of furniture, and often appears almost in its original form in unexpected places. Chippendale's clothes-presses are made, for example, on the old model.

"The clothes-presses which Chippendale gave us are somewhat reminiscent in outline of the old Spanish dower-chests; they were used to store clothes, linen, curtains, and so on; but judging by their rarity, we may safely assume that they did not come into great favor. They rested on deep feet or short legs, approximately one third of the whole design in pitch. The carcase would be sometimes square, at other times *bombé* in form, but it seldom displays the amount of garnishment we should expect to find on it after a perusal of Chippendale's book of designs. The feet were linked together by a narrow frame, and upon this the body of the piece reposed."[1]

The Armoire

At first the *armoire* was a series of shelves built into the wall and closed by wooden shutters or wings. At a later period when the piece became separate and movable it was merely a chest-upon-chest, both opening in front by means of doors or wings. Just as the chest, placed on a stand, formed the cabinet, so one chest placed upon another formed

[1] Wheeler.

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PLATE XLIX

Armoire. Lyonnais. End of Sixteenth Century

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the *armoire*. In the early period of their existence the difference between the cabinet and *armoire* was not definitely fixed, and indeed, cabinet, *armoire* and *buffet* are often synonymous. It is not until the Seventeenth Century that these pieces first become perfectly distinct. The *armoire* seems to have been little used in civil life during the Middle Ages, but was greatly employed in the monastic and religious houses. In the cloisters, the *armarium* was often turned into a cupboard for books; and in the sacristy of the churches there was always a large or small *armoire,* fixed or movable, in which the prayer-books, missals, sacred vessels and holy-oil were kept. Some of these *armoires* are still in existence. A notable one of the Thirteenth Century is preserved in the upper sacristy of the Bayeux Cathedral.

It is a huge, double-storied press of oak, both floors being divided into seven compartments. Each of these is closed by a shutter, working on strap hinges, the ends of which terminate in fleur-de-lis. The unequal number of doors opening alternately *dos à dos* presents one of those curious features of irregularity so frequently introduced by the mediæval architect. With the exception of some simple finials the *armoire* is destitute of carving, but it has been painted with monkish subjects bordered with patterns in black, white and red, the greater part of which have now disappeared.

Armoires of this early period are much scarcer than coffers and chests, but there is another splendid specimen of this same period owned by the Cathedral of Noyon. The doors of this are painted within and without.

A fine *armoire* of the perpendicular style is preserved in the vestry of York Minster.

As the art of the cabinet-maker progressed, the *armoire* became one of those pieces on which much decorative work was lavished; and, instead of the panels being painted,

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they were now either carved or received the characteristic decoration of the period — the favorite linen-fold. At the beginning of the Sixteenth Century, as the *bahut* gradually disappeared as a piece of furniture, the *armoire* took its place; therefore, it was made in all sizes and forms and decorated in all styles as they arose.

The splendid examples of *armoires* in two parts, sometimes described as *cabinets à deux corps,* enrich many museums and private collections. It is not generally known that these *armoires* were frequently lined with rich silk or brocade, fastened down with small nails, which set off the beautiful objects kept behind the doors.

There are a few fine specimens of *armoires* in the Louvre; but Cluny owns a great number of superbly carved examples of this now rare type of furniture.

It has been said that the *armoire* of the Île-de-France was generally higher than it was long, and that those made in Burgundy and the Midi were characterized by their greater width. The *armoires* of the Île-de-France are also to be recognized by their architectural effect. The slender upper part develops into a pyramid. It has two doors in the lower part and two doors in the upper part, the latter flanked by small columns surrounded by vine or laurel leaves. To Normandy, M. Molinier attributes furniture in which the architecture and sculpture remain characteristic of the Île-de-France but which is enriched with incrustations of ebony, generally in relief; and he cites a very fine *armoire* that belonged to the Émile Gavet Collection, which he thinks marks the period when the *ébéniste* succeeded to the *huchier* in making furniture.

The model of the Île-de-France was imitated elsewhere, particularly in Lyons, where such large *armoires à deux corps* were made that they were frequently called *buffets.* One of Lyonnais workmanship on Plate XLIX. follows the

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PLATE L

Seventeenth Century *Kas*, or *Armoire*, from South Germany
Metropolitan Museum

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traditions of the Île-de-France in its form and ornamentation. The panels represent the Annunciation, the Nativity and the Adoration of the Magi.

In Languedoc, the *huchiers* were under the influence both the Île-de-France and Burgundy; in other words, the style created by Jean Goujon and Du Cerceau was united in a sort of fashion by Hugues Sambin. The Burgundians inspired the artists of the Midi;—and so, upon this form of furniture, as in so many others, the sign and seal of various provinces and artists have been set.

Some of Boulle's most famous pieces were *armoires;* the Duke of Hamilton owned two magnificent specimens which were companion pieces; and the example in the Jones Collection, South Kensington Museum, made by Boulle for Louis XIV. on a model by Bérain, is valued at £10,000.

Some *armoires* of the Louis XV. period are beautifully decorated with bronze ornamentation, the broad panels and doors relieved by flowers, foliage and groups of children or monkeys swinging or playing musical instruments.

The *armoire* of this period merges into the wardrobe with its two great doors behind which are shelves, drawers, or hooks for garments to hang upon.

In the Low Countries and in Germany, the *armoire* was known as the *kas*, or *kast*, two examples of which appear on Plates.

The great Dutch *kas* was very broad and very tall. It was made of ebony, oak, or walnut, and stood on four heavy, round balls, or feet, that were often called "knots." These were sometimes repeated on the top of the cupboard and called "guardians of the porcelain ornaments." The *kas* stood in nearly every room of the old Dutch house,—in the office, in the kitchen and in the living-room, as well as in the bedrooms. The *kas* was richly carved or inlaid, and made of both ordinary and rare woods. It was very

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heavy, architectural, and ornamental; and useful for preserving the choice articles of which the Dutch owned so many.

Plate L. shows the type of the great *kas*. It is nothing but a huge wardrobe with drawers or shelves behind the two big doors, which, in the example before us, are furnished with handsome locks. Beneath these are two drawers. This piece of furniture stands on six round, flattened, ball feet or "knots," and is handsomely decorated with ornaments recalling the style of Du Cerceau and De Vries. It is owned by the Metropolitan Museum, New York. Plate LI., also owned by the Metropolitan Museum, is similar in general form.

Upon the top of the great *kas* invariably stood handsome vases and jars of porcelain or earthenware. Some *kasten* were valued at enormous prices: a *sacredaan* cupboard, or a nutwood cupboard, or one made of different woods, or inlaid with mother-of-pearl, would cost as much as a thousand florins. *Kas*, of course, means case, which brings us back again to the case-of-drawers.

To the late Seventeenth Century (about 1690) belongs the case-of-drawers popularly known as the "high-boy." (French *haut-bois*.) At first, the tall chest of drawers stood on a frame, composed of six spindle-shaped legs connected by stretchers placed close to the floor. Sometimes the spindle-legs also terminated in large balls. Three drawers were, as a rule, placed in the frame, while the chest contained three long drawers surmounted by two or three short ones below the slab. As time went on, the "high-boy" was placed on a low case-of-drawers that was supported on cabriole legs. The style came in about the time that lacquer was popular and both "high boy" and "low-boy" were made of lacquer or "painted and japanned." On Plate XXIV. a "high-boy" is shown and on Plate LII. a "low-

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PLATE LI

Seventeenth Century *Kas*, or *Armoire*, Dutch

Metropolitan Museum

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boy." Both examples are in the Metropolitan Museum and both have the old hoof-foot.

The mahogany "high-boy," decorated with brass escutcheons and key-plates and surmounted by a scroll pediment between the break of which a china ornament was often placed, was a favorite piece of bedroom furniture in the Eighteenth Century. Some of these had ornamental tops, carved like the bookcases of the day (see Frontispiece).

The low case-of-drawers, called "low-boy," was very similar in form to the *commode*. The "*bureau*" of Marie de' Medici (see Plate LXVII.) shows remarkable likeness to it also. It was a dressing-table with drawers and was always used for this purpose. Sometimes the lower part of a high-boy was also used as a dressing-table; but this generally has but one row of drawers, while the "low-boy" proper is supplied with two rows. Below the central drawer in the top row a fan-shaped ornament is frequently carved. Like the "high-boy," the earliest examples of the "low-boy" are furnished with drop-handles, especially those made of mahogany, exhibit fine brass-handles and wing-shaped key-plates.

As the century advanced, the "high-boy" became more decorative. A fan or other ornament was carved on the top drawer, and the top was decorated with a swan-necked pediment, in the centre of which a slender vase was carved. Another favorite way of ornamenting the top of the "high-boy" was by placing on it three steps of mahogany, on which china was arranged. Handsome brass handles and key-plate brightened the sombre wood (see Plate LIII.).

These useful pieces of furniture, particularly popular in America, were made of cherry, pine and other cheap woods and then stained, as well as of mahogany.

Instead of the case-of-drawers being on a stand some-

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times it was placed on a chest-of-drawers. It then becomes a chest-upon-chest or a double case-of-drawers. We find the double chest, or "high-boy," among the designs of Chippendale, who treats it much as the wardrobe, which was squarely built, or had a square top that rested upon a serpentine, or *bombé*, set of drawers. As a rule, the Chippendale high-boy has a slide fitted into the carcase, which is intended, when pulled out, to serve as a table for brushing and folding clothes before they are placed in the drawers. This slide is often mistaken for a writing-slab.

The Dressoir

The *dressoir, chest* and *bed* were the three indispensable pieces of furniture in the Middle Ages; they are found alike in princely homes and in the dwellings of the middle-class people. The *dressoir* is often wrongly called a *credence,* of which it was a development.



FRENCH DRESSOIR, FIFTEENTH CENTURY

The Italian word is *créance,* meaning *dressoir;* and *credenza* described in Italy in the Sixteenth Century as a porcelain or metal table service, was, by extension, used to designate the piece of furniture on which it was exhibited.

The word *credence* had, however, passed into currency in other countries to describe a shallow cupboard supported on legs, and sometimes rendered still more useful by means of a shelf. The *credence* was placed near the large table at meal-times, covered with a cloth, and used as a serving-table, or sideboard.

On Plate VIII. we have the early type. This is really nothing but a chest placed on legs with doors cut in the front panels; and this is the primitive sideboard. It is a

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PLATE LII

Low-boy, Lacquered
Metropolitan Museum

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handsome piece for its day with its carving of the ever-pleasing grape-and-leaf design which decorates the panels and the linenfold that adorns the doors. This piece is in the Metropolitan Museum, New York. More developed pieces appear on Plates LIV. and LV.

By the Fifteenth Century it had become of greater importance, was delicately carved and frequently adorned with a canopy or dais. Upon its tier of shelves, pieces of handsome and massive silver (and sometimes gold) were displayed. At this date, the *credence* was placed against the wall and never moved. It was now a piece of furniture intended as much for show as utility. In short, the *credence* had become a *dressoir,* for the *dressoir* makes its appearance at the beginning of the Fifteenth Century. On the shelves the handsome plate was displayed; and in the drawers were kept the delicacies and the linen cloths that were placed on the shelves during meals. From its advent, the *dressoir* was a luxurious piece of furniture, the fine proportions of which lent themselves to delicate and ornate carving.

In the castles the *dressoirs* were surmounted by shelves, the number of which was regulated by the rank of the owner; and on these shelves, which were covered with embroidered cloths, were exhibited handsome vessels of silver and gold, so massive and so abundant in the Fifteenth Century.

The form and arrangement of the *dressoir*, or *dressoir-buffet* that are to be seen in the miniatures of the illuminated manuscripts of the Middle Ages are very simple. It is little more than a chest supported on legs and supplied with doors having iron hinges. As luxury advanced, the *dressoirs* of the Fourteenth Century became more artistic in character; and the legs were grooved and carved with foliage and the doors were carved with tracery like the

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church windows. The iron-work of the locks and hinges was handsomely pierced and was set off by a background of red cloth. Above the shelves there rose a kind of baldachin, or daïs, which, towards the end of the Middle Ages, was carved in the Flamboyant Style. The decorations of the panels were usually religious in subject; but the principal motive of the decoration of these *dressoirs* was the fleur-de-lis, the national emblem of France, which the *menuisiers-huchiers* always knew how to use in the most elegant manner by arranging it in the centre of the Gothic arches. The background of the lower part was generally a series of panels representing scrolls of parchment, half unrolled, — a special form of decoration used for two centuries. In the reign of Louis XI., when carving played the chief *rôle* in furniture, figures entered largely into the ornamentation of the *dressoir-buffet,* which, heretofore, had exhibited only foliage and details of architecture. At this period, the old French School admitted pilasters with arabesques and antique medallions of the Renaissance, though holding to the Gothic pinnacles, while the new school founded on the borders of the Loire by the Italian artists of the court, cheerfully used all the arabesques and trophies and forms of ornament brought over the mountains from Milan and Florence.

The form of the *dressoir* also changed — it ceased to be four-square and became a trapeze. The two uprights of the front were cut out in such a way as to form supplementary panels, which rested on two pillars formed like Gothic columns or balusters. The old French workmen habitually carved on the doors of these pieces the story of the Annunciation, while those who fell under the Italian influence covered the doors and panels with a whole vegetation of arabesques, *fleurons,* and trophies of exquisite elegance. Moreover, it is not rare to find *dressoirs* in which these two

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PLATE LIII

Double Chest of Drawers, or Chest-upon-Chest,
Mahogany
Metropolitan Museum

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styles are mingled; and it is impossible to say to which School they belong. After a time, the fusion was complete and the workshops of Île-de-France, Touraine, Normandy, Auvergne, Burgundy and Lyons produced works in the new style, but which were absolutely French in character. The work of Jean Goujon and Germain Pilon inspired the wood-carvers of Normandy and l'Île-de-France, while Hugues Sambin was influenced by the sculptors of the Rhône valley and the arabesques designed by the printers of Lyons.

The *dressoir*, or *buffet*, of the Sixteenth Century differed little in form from previous models. In some examples, however, both parts were open, and neither contained a cupboard; in others, the *armoire* was in the lower part. Some of them might be compared in form to the modern upright piano. Magnificent carving characterizes the Burgundian examples as well as those of the Lyonnais School. The panels are frequently carved with mythological or classic subjects, and chimæræ or satyrs issue from the graceful and abundant foliage in the style of Goujon and Du Cerceau.

In the museums and private collections a great number of *dressoirs* are preserved. The oldest examples, dating from the beginning of the Fifteenth Century, are very simple in their decoration. Those dating from the reign of Louis XI. are frequently carved with the Annunciation. Beautiful examples, on which sometimes the monograms of Louis XII. and Anne of Brittany, are seen, were made by the School of Touraine. Less delicately carved but splendid examples were produced in Germany and Flanders; but perhaps the handsomest of all were made by the joiners of Burgundy and Lyons.

A Burgundian *dressoir* is shown on Plate XII. It is made of carved wood, furnished with two doors and two drawers,

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and supported on a console with two pillars. The back of the console is carved with two cartouches, one bearing a coat-of-arms, and the other the date 1570. The base rests on flattened ball feet. The carving is elaborate, consisting of caryatides, foliage, palmettes and scrolls. The panel of the door on the left represents the Sacrifice of Abraham and the one on the right, the Blessing of Jacob. Above the one is a figure of Justice; above the other, a figure of Charity.

The Court-Cupboard

In England this piece of furniture was known as the court-cupboard and was used for the display and keeping of plate and other table-furniture. It was always in evidence at great entertainments; and, like the *dressoir*, the number of its shelves was regulated by etiquette. In France two shelves were allowed to ordinary persons; three to the nobility; and four or five to royalty. In England two shelves were permitted in the baronet's home; three in an earl's; four were given to a princess; and five to a Queen.

"The dressers of countesses should have three shelves, on which should be ranged dishes, pots, flagons, and large drinking-cups, whilst on the broadest part of the dresser there should be two large wax candles, to be lit when any one is in the room," is an old rule.

When Henry VIII. entertained some French Ambassadors at Greenwich, he had a "cupborde seven stages high and thirteen feet long, set with standing cuppes, bolles, flaggons and great pottles all of fine golde, some garnished with one stone and some with other stones and pearles." On great occasions the court-cupboard sometimes consisted of as many as twelve shelves. The livery-cupboard, on the

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PLATE LIV

Seventeenth Century Carved Oak Cupboard
Metropolitan Museum

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other hand, seems to have been exclusively used for service and as a receptacle for food. It received its name from the French *livrer* (to deliver); and it always stood in the mediæval banquet-hall. From it viands were served — delivered. By its side stood the head-butler in ceremonious attitude. Upon the court-cupboard were arranged the plate, the cups, the ewer and basin which took the place of the modern fingerbowls and the big almsdish. In his *Creed of an Epicure* (1576), James Sandford says: "My chambers (I sayde my parlours and other romes) hangyd with cloth of gold, my cupboardes heades set out and adorned after the richest, costliest and most glorious manner, with one cuppe cock height upon another, beside the greate basin and ewer of silver and gold filled at tymes with sweete and pleasant waters."

The livery-cupboard was sometimes kept in the bedrooms with light provisions for an impromptu meal. It was furnished with doors and locks, and the panels were often perforated for the sake of ventilation. In some rural districts in England these old cupboards are known popularly as "bread-and-cheese cupboards."

The Buffet

The *dressoir*, which was sufficient for the needs of the life of the Middle Ages, did not suffice for the luxuries that developed in the Seventeenth Century, and the great *buffet* took its place. At the end of the Seventeenth Century the *dressoir* disappeared.

The *buffet à deux corps* was usually a massive and elegant piece of furniture. It may be described as two boxes, placed one above the other and opened by means of four doors, two in each part. These doors were carved with trophies, cartouches and chimæræ, and the

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panels separated by handsomely sculptured terms, or caryatides.

Du Cerceau and Delaune designed many of these *buffets*, the various parts of which are not always clearly defined; and sometimes it is hard to tell whether they are *armoires*, *buffets*, or *dressoirs*. In searching for what was novel, these designers often became eccentric. However, the superiority of the execution often atoned for the inferiority of the form.

The *dressoirs* by Du Cerceau are of three varieties; one is divided into two compartments; another into three; and the third, a chest with folding doors placed on a hollowed-out base or stand, and the top adorned with some architectural ornamentation. During the last period of the Sixteenth Century, the general heaviness increased; and the *buffet-dressoir* grew to resemble the models in favor in Germany and the Low Countries. They were sometimes supported on swelling balusters and ornamented with many columns; and, after a time, carving was given up for inlaid woods. The colossal Flemish *armoire* of Vredeman de Vries was the favorite model. In the Seventeenth Century, however, the *buffet* took its definite shape, — a piece of furniture in two parts, enclosed by two doors in each, the upper part being slightly smaller than the lower and placed a little back. The *armoire*, on the other hand, was enclosed by two long wings.

The use of the *buffet-dressoir* was to hold the dishes and dessert and table utensils. There are few dining-rooms in which this piece of furniture does not appear, but it was forced to become smaller for the smaller dining-room. In modern buffets, the old shelves have been restored.

In England the court-cupboard gave way to the *buffet* towards the close of the Seventeenth Century. In 1710, "buffet" is described as "in a vestibule or dining-room, a

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PLATE LV

Court-Cupboard with applied Ornaments. Jacobean

Metropolitan Museum

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large table with stages in the style of a *credence* upon which are displayed the vases, basins and crystal for the service of the table and for magnificence. This *buffet*, which the Italians call *credence*, is with them usually placed in the great *salon* and closed in by a balustrade breast high."

In England the *buffet* was also the little corner-cupboard fixed to the wall. In 1748, Dyche defines it as "A handsome open cupboard or repository for plate, glasses, china, etc., which are put there either for ornament, or convenience of serving the table."

This *buffet* soon went out of use for the dining-room, for, in 1751, Chambers writes: "*Beaufait, Buffet*, or *Bufet* was anciently a little apartment separated from the rest of the room by slender wooden columns, for disposing china and glassware, etc., also called a cabinet. It is now properly a large table in a dining-room, called also a sideboard, for the plate, glasses, bottles, basins, etc., to be placed." The sideboard, therefore, was now nothing but a plain table, without drawers, or cupboards, or upper shelves. Chippendale gives designs only for what he calls sideboard-tables.

In France also during the first half of the Eighteenth Century, the sideboard was only a table, usually of stone or marble. In 1710, the architect D'Aviler thus describes the *buffet:* "The *buffet* can be incrusted with marble or Portland stone, or wainscotted with woodwork. It consists of a recess which occupies one entire side of the room; here you place a table of marble or stone supported on consoles, beneath which you may stand a small stone basin for cooling the wine bottles. On each side of the table is a deep niche, ornamented with aquatic attributes, such as tritons, dolphins and mascarons of gilded lead, which throw water into the little basins below, from which it escapes, as well as into the basin underneath the table. The back of the

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buffet is ornamented with a little gallery of consoles, above which is hung a picture, usually representing fruits or flowers, a concert of music, or other pleasant subjects."

Again, in designing a dining-room, he says: "The chimney-piece faces the two windows; the angles are rounded, and in them I have placed niches for marble tables, on which can be set the silver, crystal and dessert, during the repast, and afterwards be put away in the closet next to this room." Evidently, the carved-wood *dressoir*, in all its forms and developments, has gone out of fashion.

The *buffet* and the sideboard were entirely distinct during the Eighteenth Century. In 1803 Sheraton writes: "*Buffet*, anciently an apartment separated from the rest of the room by small pilasters or balusters. Their use was for placing china and glass-ware, with other articles of a similar nature. In houses of persons of distinction in France the *buffet* is in a detached room, decorated with pictures suitable to the use of such apartments, as fountains, cisterns, vases, etc. These ancient *buffets* seem in some measure superseded by the use of modern sideboards, but not altogether, as china is seldom, if ever, placed upon them, and we, therefore, think that a buffet may, with some propriety, be restored to modern use, and prove ornamental to a breakfast room, answering as the repository of a tea-equipage. Under this idea, we have given a design of one. The lower part is to be enclosed with doors, having silk curtains, with worked brass or wire before them. The upright border on the top of the lower part is of brass, together with those round the china shelves. These shelves are supported at each end by four brass columns, made very light. The lights on each side are of brass, and may be unscrewed and taken away occasionally. As these *buffets* would suit well to be placed one on each side of the fireplace of a breakfast-room, they might very conveniently

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PLATE LVI

Shearer Sideboard (1748)

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hold such branches with the addition of one on the top. Under the cornice is a Gothic drapery and fringe above it."

The Sideboard

Thus the cupboard, or dresser with drawers, — the buffet-sideboard — disappeared for a time and the sideboard, instead of being a storing place for linen, wine, silver, dishes, etc., became merely a serving-table or carving-board. An oak sideboard in the South Kensington Museum, given to the period of William III., seems to indicate that the sideboard-table belongs to the Dutch period of English furniture. In Chippendale's day, however, even the drawers beneath the top were omitted. Chippendale made sideboard-tables and not sideboards. His earliest form was in the Louis Quinze Style and varied from four to seven feet in length. The legs were heavy and frequently cabriole in shape, ending in the claw-and-ball foot. The upper edge supporting the top was frequently carved, and the spring of the knee was also often carved. The acanthus leaf, the egg-and-tongue, the gadroon edge and shell and the Vitruvian scroll are the patterns usually employed.

"The top was sometimes of mahogany, but generally consisted of a large slab of finely figured marble, occasionally of some coarse slate or other medium, with a veneer of fine marble over it. The master eschewed the use of wood because it was liable to be marked by the hot dishes placed upon it. . . It is quite exceptional to find one of these 'boards' with a drawer or other fittings; but now and then one comes across an example with a single drawer, more commonly a slab to pull out and increase the area upon which china, glass, or silver could rest." [1]

[1] Wheeler.

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Later in his career, Chippendale used Chinese fretwork as decoration for his serving- or side-tables, and placed large carved brackets at the angles where the legs joined the slab. Very rarely he added a low rail of wood on the edge of the slab next the wall. He also very often introduced some Gothic ornamentation into his Louis Quinze or Chinese treatment.

Chippendale's sideboard-table differed little if at all from his pier-table.

"There is considerable doubt as to the origin of the sideboard, as we now know it. It will be remembered that the original sideboard was a large side-table, and in Chippendale's time, this used to be crowned with a more or less beautifully figured marble in order that the hot dishes and plates resting upon it should leave no marks. The brothers Adam supplemented this model by two pedestal cupboards which stood one at each end of the 'board,' and these were in turn crowned by knife-urns, or rarely by a wine-urn and knife-urn. Presently we find these wing additions being incorporated with the 'board'; but who was responsible for the new idea? It may be laid down at once that the brothers Adam, Heppelwhite, and Shearer were all at work when the change took place. Successful as the Adams had been with their original tables and pedestals, they were far from happy when the new sideboard came in. Shearer seems to have been the first illustrator of the complete sideboard, and very charming examples he gave us, even though the majority of them were somewhat plain in quality." [1]

Constance Simon holds Robert Adam responsible for the invention of the pedestal, or cellaret sideboard. She says: "Robert Adam's sketches for sideboards with pedestal cupboards, surmounted by urns, are the earliest examples that have come down to us of this type of furniture. It

[1] Wheeler.

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PLATE LVII

Sheraton Sideboard. Sideboard designed by Heppelwhite

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is very likely that he was the first to conceive the idea of thus elaborating the simple serving-table of the earlier part of the Eighteenth Century. The pedestals were sometimes fixed to the centre framework and sometimes detached. The sideboards were often fitted with a brass rail at the back in order to support the silver plate. The chief wood of which the sideboards were made was mahogany; the ornaments were wood inlay, carving, stucco and brass. Adam's dining-rooms frequently had a carved recess at one end with a concave vault above, and he then designed a sideboard with a curved back exactly to fit this recess."

Heppelwhite's sideboard generally contained one long central drawer and a short drawer at each end, beneath which was a deep drawer. The legs were often ornamented with a fall of bell-flowers in satin-wood and terminated in the "spade" foot.

Heppelwhite speaks as if this form were new. He says:

"The great utility of this piece of furniture has procured it a very general reception; and the conveniences it affords render a dining-room incomplete without a sideboard." In explaining its features he tells us that "the right hand drawer has partitions for wine bottles. Behind this is a place for cloths or napkins, occupying the whole depth of the drawer.

"The drawer on the left hand has two divisions, the hinder one lined with green cloth to hold plate, etc., under a cover; the front one is lined with lead for the convenience of holding water to wash glasses, etc.; there must be a valve-cock or plug, at the bottom, to let off the dirty water, and also in the other drawer to change the water necessary to keep the wine, etc., cool; or they may be made to take out. The long drawer in the middle is adapted for table-linen,

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etc. They are often made to fit into a recess, but the general custom is to make them from 5½ to 7 feet long, 3 feet high, and 28 to 32 inches wide."

However this may be, we find Heppelwhite making sideboards with and without drawers, i. e., the old sideboard-table, pedestals and vases, which held their place on each side of the sideboard, and sideboards which were elaborately fitted up with conveniences for the butler. The vases that surmounted the pedestals were intended to hold iced-water for drinking, water for the butler's use, or they were knife-cases. The height of the pedestal was the same as the sideboard, and the pedestal was sixteen or eighteen inches square. The vase stood two feet, three inches.

The vase knife-case was, as a rule, made of satin-wood, or of copper, painted and japanned. A small spring fixed to the stem supported the top of the case.

Shearer's sideboards are somewhat lighter in general effect than Heppelwhite's except in the case where the pedestals are joined to the body of the piece.

"Whether Shearer influenced Heppelwhite or Heppelwhite Shearer is a question to which we are not likely to find a definite answer; yet as a considerable portion of Sheraton's style was founded on Shearer's lines, the presumption is that if a man of such very decided personality was affected, Heppelwhite was no less indebted to this great but practically forgotten designer."[1] (See Plates LVI. and LVII.)

"Cellarets," says Heppelwhite, "called also *gardes de vin,* are generally made of mahogany and hooped with brass hoops lacquered; the inner part is divided with partitions and lined with lead for bottles; may be made of any shape. These are of general use where sideboards are without drawers."

[1] R. S. Clouston.

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PLATE LVIII

Seventeenth Century Spanish Cabinet (*Vargueños*)

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Sheraton informs us that they were made in the form of a sarcophagus and "adapted to stand under a sideboard, some of which have covers and others without." He thought it a good idea to have rings at each end of the cellaret so that the servants could move it about. He also wanted the rings, as well as the lions' feet or dolphins' heads on which his models rested, to be cast in brass and lacquered.

Sheraton continued to develop the models put forth by Heppelwhite and Shearer, but in his later period he returned occasionally to the old sideboard-table without drawers. Sideboards of this character were ornamented with a little brass rail and separate pedestals with vases stood at each side of the table.

In some Sheraton sideboards the pedestals were made separately and screwed to the sideboard, and the top slab was placed over all three parts and screwed down. The part beneath the long top drawer, curved from leg to leg, was supplied with a tambour-shutter, and, therefore, formed a little enclosed cupboard. The back of such a sideboard was decorated with a mirror or ornamental brass-work.

Although it required most delicate workmanship, the square knife-case was too well known for Heppelwhite to describe it. He merely said: "It may be made of mahogany inlaid, or of satin, or of other wood at pleasure."

Sheraton gave designs for knife-cases, both concave and convex. In his day a pair of these stood upon the sideboard. A tall vase or urn-shaped case was often made, especially for spoons.

The Empire Sideboard

In the Eighteenth Century the *buffet* disappeared for a time from fashionable houses in Paris. In his book on

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Architecture, Sobry writes: "*Buffets* are pieces of refectory furniture on which rich vases proper to feasts are displayed. The use of these is dying out in France, although all foreign nations retain it. Perhaps we shall return to it. Meanwhile we use low buffets, with marble tops, on which the dishes are placed." However, the old carved wood buffet was too useful a piece of furniture to be relinquished by the middle and lower classes. It occurs constantly in the pictures of Chardin and contemporary prints. De Champeaux says: "The extraordinary skill of the ornament-carvers of the reigns of Louis XIV. and Louis XV. enabled them to produce *buffets*, the ornamentation of which recalls the finest woodwork of our palaces. The beauty of their execution makes them sought by collectors almost as eagerly as those pieces with copper and tortoise-shell inlay, or bronze applied on exotic woods. There are exceptions, however. The *buffet* generally filled the more modest rôle of a useful piece of furniture, the roomy interior of which could contain the dessert and table and kitchen utensils. Its dimensions would allow its use only in the large kitchens of the provinces; and the Parisian kitchens had to be content with *buffets* proportionate to their small dimensions. There were few dining-rooms without a buffet; but it was small on account of limited space. Most often it tended to revert to its original form and assume the aspect of a *dressoir*. The central body has lost its isolated supports and rests on the ground, and it is surmounted by shelves. This form is repeated in mahogany, in the shops of the Faubourg Saint-Antoine, with an abundance that is as commonplace as inartistic. Another disposition that is more logical affects the form of a *buffet-armoire* the lower body of which serves as a base and is separate from shelves placed in an *armoire* with glass doors by an opening called the cave, in which the dessert is placed. Unfortunately this buffet, gen-

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PLATE LIX

Seventeenth Century Carved Ebony Secretary

Louvre

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erally of carved oak, makes pretensions to carving the cheap conditions under which it is produced do not permit it to justify. However, our workmen produced walnut buffets the execution of which is superior to the latter. Germany and England carved numerous buffets in the Renaissance style. The former, returning to the models of Dietterlin and De Vries, shows hardly anything but cold and heavy work; while the insular production, by mingling the ornament of the Tudor Style with the capricious forms of the Far East, succeeded in creating original furniture entirely appropriate to the Anglo-Saxon spirit."

It is interesting to note instructions in 1821 for a sideboard and the wine-cooler that stands beneath it. The authority tells us:

"The sideboard should be made entirely of mahogany or of fine oak, which has been so generally adopted of late in mansions furnished in the ancient style. This, in fact, is the more consistent, and, therefore, the more tasteful mode of decoration; for, in matters of this kind, consistency is absolutely essential to tasteful decoration. Mahogany, however, may be used with great propriety, and, perhaps, the effect of that wood, on the whole, is richer than that produced by oak. Of course, however, the adoption of one or the other must depend upon a variety of circumstances.

"The cellaret, which has been made in the form of a sarcophagus, is an imitation of one represented on a tomb in Luton Church; and, of course, it should be made to correspond in size and appearance with the other parts of the sideboard. The shields are well adapted to receive carvings of family arms which would add greatly to the richness and appearance of the whole."

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Furniture

The Cabinet

Generally speaking, the cabinet is a chest placed on a stand; and, like the *buffet*, its upper part, or chest, is closed by two doors. The interior is composed of a series of drawers usually concealed behind doors, or wings. The drawers are frequently of different sizes and each is locked independently of the other. Often, too, there are secret drawers and compartments. In the *huche*, as we have seen, people kept their small treasures; and many a *huche* for the sake of convenience was made to open on the sides; and, as time wore on, the *huche* was placed on a stand with feet, and was opened by means of two front doors, behind which drawers, or shelves, now replaced the little boxes with which the *huche* had occasionally been furnished. In this form, it was used as a marriage coffer; and, when a high stand was added, it was called a cabinet.

Thus, a development of the simple *huche*, the cabinet became one of the most sumptuous and ornate pieces of furniture; and the wood cabinet-maker was employed to describe the artisan who made fine furniture, while the common joiner made the simpler pieces.

Some authorities insist that this form of furniture is of Oriental origin; and certainly the examples produced in some countries show Eastern influence in both form and decoration. Venice, Spain and Portugal received many cabinets from the East; and in Spain and Portugal the cabinet was made in great numbers, especially in Vargas, a province of Toledo, from which some authorities say the word *vargueños*, or *bargueños*, is derived. Where these cabinets were ornamented with marquetry or pierced metal-work, or made of exotic wood, carved or incrusted with ivory or ebony, they were of a special fashion that did not

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PLATE LX

Eighteenth Century Italian Carved and Gilt Cabinet on Stand

Eighteenth Century English Carved and Gilt Cabinet on Stand

Lucca

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cross the Pyrenees. Cabinets of tortoise-shell, incrusted with ivory or mother-of-pearl, were made in Lisbon by Prabro Fibrug; and one signed Jeronimo Fernandez, 1661, is in the South Kensington Museum.

In the *vargueños* the adaptation of the coffer is very evident. The long box is placed on a stand consisting of two legs strengthened by a balustrade. The outside of the simple box is ornamented with iron-work. The flap lets down and is held by supports pulled forward from their invisible hiding-place. The interior, then seen, is divided into a number of little drawers, or closets enclosed by wings. The interior of these Spanish cabinets is exactly like the Italian and Flemish cabinets, the only difference being in the style of decoration for the faces of the drawers and shutters. In an old dialogue published in 1669, the following questions are asked and answered: "How much has your worship paid for this cabinet?" "It is worth more than forty ducats." "What wood is it made of?" "The red one is made of mahogany from the Habanas, and the black one is made of ebony and the white one of ivory. You will find the workmanship excellent. Here you will find a finer cabinet." "Where was it made?" "It was brought with these chairs from Salamanca."

Cabinets decorated with *pietra dura* were imported into Spain, for Madame d'Aulnoy, when describing the house of a grandee of Spain in her *Voyage en Espagne* (1643), speaks of "fine cabinets enriched with stones, which are not made in Spain." "What I find most beautiful," she adds, "are the *escaparates,* a species of small cabinet, shut with one door and filled with every imaginable rarity."

Among a list of Spanish wood-carvers of the Sixteenth and the Seventeenth Century, the names occur of Francisco, master-maker of cabinets in ebony and ivory (1617), and Lucas de Velasco, master in painting and gilding cabinets (1633).

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Cabinets and *armoires* were also covered with tortoise-shell and gilt-bronze, and enclosed by glass doors. Cabinets of ebony, inlaid and covered with *repoussé* silver-work must have been very generally made in Spain. Silver was used to so great an extent after the conquest of America that a law was issued in 1574 prohibiting with the utmost rigor the making and selling of this kind of merchandise in order not to increase the scarcity of silver. "No cabinets, desks, coffers, braziers, etc., shall be manufactured of silver," was one order issued.

Cabinets of inlaid ivory, or different colored woods, were brought into Spain from Italy and Germany; in fact, so many cabinets and *escritoires* were imported that a petition was presented to the King by one Pedro Gutierrez begging for protection for this industry. We also learn that "The cabinets and *escritoires* (*contadores y bufetes*), which were worth 500, 600 and 700 *reales* when brought from Germany, are now made in Spain for 250 and 300 *reales* each;" and in 1603 Philip III. issued an edict in which "cabinets of every kind coming from Nuremberg are not allowed to enter the country."

Escritorios de la Chine, described by De Laval (see page 38), were probably the same kind of articles that Catherine of Braganza took with her sixty years later when she went to London as the bride of the king; for Evelyn tells us that: "The Queen brought over with her from Portugal such Indian cabinets as had never before been seen here."

Flanders excelled in making cabinets; and Antwerp was especially famous for them. French noblemen had such a fancy for collecting Flemish cabinets that Henri II. sent French workmen to the Low Countries to learn the art of making them and of carving in ebony. On their return, he established them in the Louvre. One of these was Laurent Stabre; another, Pierre Boulle, the uncle of André

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PLATE LXI

Eighteenth Century English Painted Cabinet on Stand

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Charles Boulle; and another, Jean Macé of Blois, who was given a lodging in the Louvre "on account of his long practice of this art in the Low Countries, and the skill he has shown in his cabinet-work in ebony and other woods of various colors that he has presented to the Regent Queen."

Du Cerceau also designed cabinets of very elegant form.

The cabinet was the most fashionable piece of furniture in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries. Not only was it made of wood or damaskeened metal and variously carved or inlaid, but we also find leather cabinets. Two beautiful examples of the latter are in Cluny Museum; one is of azure leather stamped with gold, and exhibiting all the skill of the book-binder's work. The picture on the central drawer, a sort of fountain of love at which are standing a knight and a lady, is supposed to represent Philip IV. and Margaret of Austria, who were married in 1599. It is thought to be of Flemish origin.

The faces of the twelve drawers each represent Renaissance pictures, and each is different.

The second cabinet is French, and dates from the reign of Louis XIII. It is of red morocco, tooled with gold. The supports are also of leather. These two pieces are as beautiful as they are curious.

Ebony cabinets with geometrical motives, Renaissance patterns, pictures, etc., in ivory; cabinets inlaid with mother-of-pearl and ivory and embellished with arabesques of gold; and cabinets of iron damaskeened with gold and silver and decorated with bas-reliefs were made in Milan, Naples and Venice; and all were upon practically the same architectural model — first the stand, or table, on four, six, or eight legs connected by stretchers on which rests a pyramid of drawers flanked by columns, or pilasters, enclosed by doors or a falling-flap and surmounted by an ornamental figure, or several figures. The interior was often elabor-

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ately decorated with marbles, agates, lapis-lazuli, amber, mother-of-pearl, tortoise-shell, and sometimes marquetry of colored woods or ivory. Nothing could be more sumptuous than the Italian cabinets thus inlaid with exotic woods, or incrusted with precious metals and semi-precious stones. Some of them had pilasters of lapis-lazuli, plates of embossed silver, paintings, miniatures and silver or gold figurines. To make such a work, a great number of craftsmen were required.

Ebony seems to have been the favorite wood in use in Italy; and many of the ebony cabinets contained in the Pitti Palace and the Louvre might pass for mourning furniture until they are opened, when the utmost magnificence is revealed in the decoration of the drawers.

Cardinal Richelieu had some splendid Italian cabinets, some of which passed into the possession of Cardinal Mazarin. One of these was five feet long and five feet, ten inches high. It rested on four ebony columns united in front and four pear-wood pilasters behind. The octagonal panel on the doors represented Amphion on the dolphin; the frieze was decorated with marine monsters; and the interior compartments adorned with flowers.

One of Mazarin's treasures was described as:

"An ebony cabinet having a little moulding on the sides, quite plain outside, the front being divided into three arcades, in the middle of which are six niches, in four of which in the lower row, are four virgins of ebony bearing bouquets of silver, the said doors being ornamented with eight columns of veined lapis-lazuli, the bases and capitals of composite order in silver, the fronts of the doors and the rest of the cabinet being ornamented with various pieces, viz., cornalines, agate and jasper, set with silver; and above the arcades are three masques in jasper and twelve roses of the same mixed with six oval cornalines; the remainder

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PLATE LXII

Late Louis XV. *Encoignure*, or Corner Cabinet

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is ornamented with silver let into the ebony in cartouche and leaf-work."

A famous cabinet of ebony decorated with small columns of *pietra dura* and bronze ornaments was made by Buontalenti for the Grand Duke of Tuscany, and was further ornamented with miniatures of the most beautiful ladies of Florence; and another great cabinet said to have been made for Marie of Gonzaga, Queen of Poland, now in the Cluny, shows the kind of furniture made in Florence at the end of the Sixteenth and beginning of the Seventeenth Century. This is in three stages and is encased in tortoise-shell within and without. It is embellished with *pietra dura* and other stones, representing birds and landscapes; and, moreover, it is adorned with pilasters of lapis-lazuli, cornelians, plaques of silver, paintings and miniatures. The whole piece is ornamented with beaten and open-worked copper. The cabinet is supported on a stand with four legs ornamented with copper capitals. The stand is also incrusted with mother-of-pearl and tortoise-shell.

The interior is beautifully decorated, and is just as ornate as the exterior. Many of the mosaics, however, have been replaced by miniatures of the reign of Louis XV.

It was as fashionable to own German as it was to own Flemish cabinets. Catherine de' Medici was one of those who had several "*cabinets d' Allemagne.*"

Many of the German cabinets are so wonderfully decorated that they have been aptly called "palaces in miniature." Not satisfied with rare carvings in ivory and marvellous silver ornamentations — the metal-workers of Augsburg were specially skilful — the Germans carried decoration still further than the Italians and introduced amber plaques into the façades, a fashion that persisted until the Eighteenth Century.

Hans Schwanhard (died 1621) introduced into the deco-

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ration of cabinets the rayed and wavy borders, a characteristic by which many pieces of furniture of the Seventeenth Century may be recognized. The Germans also borrowed from Italy the fashion of introducing into the façades of the cabinets painting and gold-work executed on glass. This practice dates from the end of the Fifteenth and the beginning of the Sixteenth Century.

Among the famous examples of German cabinets is one by Hans Schieferstein dated 1568, ornamented with carved ivory; and one by Kellerthaler of Nuremberg, in ebony, dated 1585 — both in the Museum of Dresden. An ebony cabinet decorated with plaques of copper on which are engraved pictures from Virgilius Solis, dating from the end of the Sixteenth Century, is in the Castle of Rosenborg (Copenhagen). The most celebrated of all is the *Kunstschrank of Pomerania,* now in the Museum of Industrial Art, Berlin. The latter displays all the magnificence of Italian luxury as interpreted by a German artist. This cabinet was made in Augsburg by Philip Hainhofer, for Philip II., Duke of Pomerania. It was finished in 1617. Hainhofer called in the aid of many artists for the ivory carvings, the silver bas-reliefs and the enamelled plaques which entered into its decoration. Altogether the services of one sculptor, three painters, one painter in enamel, six goldsmiths, an organ-maker, two clock-makers, a mechanician, a cabinet-maker, a modeller in wax, an engraver on metal, an engraver of precious stones, a turner, a locksmith, two sheath-makers and a binder were employed. This wonderful cabinet is, however, comparatively small; it is but four feet, ten inches high; three feet, four inches wide; and two feet, ten inches deep. The wood is ebony, supported on four heads of griffins of silver-gilt, and also a large scroll which bears the chief weight. Lapis-lazuli, jasper, cornelian, agate and chased silver ornaments adorn the work; and there are also

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PLATE LXIII

Louis XV. *Commode*, signed L. Boudin

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medallions of silver and Limoges enamel. The drawers are of sandal-wood lined with red morocco.

Every Dutch house of the Seventeenth Century had its cabinet for the preservation and display of the little articles that had been gathered for several generations. Sometimes these were simple and sometimes they were very costly. It is amusing to read that the wife of an old Dutch pastor of this date had a longing for one of these treasures. When the worthy minister was asked how much he would charge for his translation of Cicero's *Epistolæ ad familiares,* he apologized for mentioning any reward; but "having to take heed of his wife whom the Lord had given him for a help-meet," he asked for a "nutwood cabinet with a set of porcelain to go with it and ornaments for the top," which the good lady, like all other Dutch ladies of her time, was very anxious to possess; and so the pastor hoped the consistory would grant it.

The cabinet was an object of special luxury for the exhibition of little articles of value possessed by the rich. Whether carved or inlaid, its drawers were lined with morocco, velvet, or silk; and those cabinets that had glass doors and shelves were covered with crimson velvet, green silk, tooled-leather, or cloth-of-gold. Very frequently, silver ribbon was twisted behind the glass into geometrical patterns, or into a sort of lattice-work, or the initials or monogram of the owner, and supplied with hooks, from which were suspended the watches, jewels, silver trinkets and Oriental curios so valued by the owner.

There was a great taste for lacquered cabinets in England during the days of the later Stuarts; and they were called, as a rule, "Japan Cabinets." These were not only imported from the East and from Holland, but were made in England, where the art of lacquering became known about 1633. In 1693, we hear of "Japan Cabinets, Indian

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and English," made by John Gunley, in London. In Queen Anne's day, they lacquered upon oak and pine; and some of it is in excellent preservation. Later in the century, they used the less durable beech and sycamore. Lacquered panels were also imported and made up into the pieces of furniture.

Marquetry cabinets were also highly prized in their day. Occasionally beautiful specimens come into the market. A cabinet of the William III. period was sold recently in London for a hundred guineas. It was five feet, nine inches high and three feet, eleven inches wide. It consisted of sixteen drawers and cupboard. The work was English marquetry on a walnut ground, and the folding-doors were beautifully inlaid with birds, insects and flowers in vases.

The "Queen Anne cabinets" most prized by collectors are those decorated with marquetry in arabesque patterns, or with "cobweb" or "seaweed" panels. The cornice often contains a long, single drawer, and the inside of the doors is ornamented with marquetry panels.

A very handsome example was sold recently in London for 340 guineas. It was composed of ten drawers and a cupboard with one drawer, on a stand, having two drawers, with scroll-shaped supports. The cabinet was inlaid with arabesque foliage and brass drop-handles. Its height was five feet, five inches, and its width three feet, five inches.

A cabinet of the first half of the Eighteenth Century is shown on Plate LX. It is of fine walnut, inlaid with ivory and having carved and gilt decorations. The upper part consists of a cupboard with a long drawer underneath. Behind this the two small cupboards containing eight drawers. The stand has richly carved and gilt cabriole legs with ball-and-claw feet. An Italian stand and glass cabinet of the same period shows similar legs with extravagant carving and appears also on Plate LX.

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PLATE LXIV

Regency *Bureau* made for Louis XV.

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The Adam cabinets are semi-circular. They are often ornamented with painted panels, and are made of beautiful exotic woods. They differ but little from the *commodes* of the day. The Heppelwhite cabinet is also similar to the Heppelwhite *commode.*

Sheraton designed cabinets in the prevailing taste of the Louis XVI. Style in his first period; and later in his career cabinets in the new Empire taste.

The following examples sold recently in London are all Sheraton pieces: Satin-wood cabinet (2 ft. 3 in. wide) with glazed folding-doors carved with foliage, drawers beneath, fluted legs, 56 guineas; satin-wood cabinet (7 ft. 9 in. high, 3 ft. 5 in. wide), consisting of shelves behind glazed folding-doors, central drawer forming desk, folding-doors below, the paintings, basket of flowers, 180 guineas; small cabinet (2 ft. wide), folding-doors enclosing drawers, bands and zigzags of tulip-wood, inlaid, fall-down front and drawers at end, 100 guineas.

An English painted cabinet on a stand (Plate LXI.) follows the old original form. The whole cabinet is painted inside as well as outside by Cipriani. The two panels on the doors represent Venus in her car drawn by doves and attended by Cupid and a Sacrifice to Flora; the sides are painted with Muses, medallions, ribbons and flowers, and the top with Cupid, doves and flowers. The borders are delicately painted arabesques, brightened with gilt beadings. The doors are painted on the other side with mythological subjects and the eleven drawers they conceal with Cupids, doves, flowers and ribbons.

The table on which the cabinet stands is supplied with a drawer, the lines of which follow the lines of the cabinet. This is painted with medallions, classical figures, Cupids, masks, arabesques and swags of flowers, and is supported on tapering legs also sympathetically painted. The back-

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ground of the whole cabinet inside and out is cream colored, the height 4 feet and length 2 feet 2½ inches.

What some critics consider the most important piece of English furniture ever produced is a cabinet that was designed by Seddons in 1793 for the King of Spain (Charles IV.) and made by Seddons's foreman, Newham. It is nine feet high, six feet long and three feet at its greatest depth. It is decorated with panels, painted by William Hamilton, R. A., representing the insignia of the Spanish Orders of Knighthood, the Golden Fleece, the Immaculate Conception, Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter, Fire and Water, Night and Morning, Ceres in a car drawn by lions, Juno and her peacocks and many Cupids.

"The inlaid work on it is superlative, whilst the chased and gilt metal-work mounted on it has no English rival. Inside, the carcase is fitted as a dressing-table, bureau and jewel-case in a most clever fashion. In contour a majestic dome rises from the centre, and this is flanked by two separate, square-shaped wings. Imperial eagles guard the top, whilst the whole rests on six lions couchant. Classic draped figures, cherubs and fauns' heads in relief carving further set off this remarkable example, which is to-day worth many thousands of pounds."[1]

To this class of furniture also belongs the china-cupboard and china-cabinet, known in France as the *vitriue* on account of its glass doors. Chippendale's china-cabinet stands on a frame and consists of a series of shelves enclosed behind glass doors. Sometimes the glass is encircled by a gilt moulding; but, as a rule, it consists of small panes brought together in a charming Gothic pattern of squares, lozenges, or ovals by means of strap mouldings. Small cabinets Chippendale made in the "Chinese style" with pagoda top, and, perhaps, a single glass door with a fretwork border. The

[1] Wheeler.

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PLATE LXV

Louis XV. *Bureau-Commode* with Bronze-gilt Ornamentation and Leaf Shoes

Chippendale *Bureau-Commode*

Metropolitan Museum

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frame consisting of four straight legs sympathetically carved with Chinese ornamentation or fretwork.

China ware was at such a height in Chippendale's day that it is not surprising to find a great number of china-cases, shelves, cupboards and cabinets made purposely to display it. As a rule, the decoration of these was a conglomeration of Chinese motives: fretwork, pagoda roofs, mandarin-hats, little bells, leaves, scrolls and dripping-water. One of these he describes as "a very neat china-case upon a frame with glass doors in the front and ends; betwixt the middle feet is a stretcher with a canopy which will hold a small figure." He adds that "the design must be executed by the hands of an ingenious workman, and when neatly japanned will appear very beautiful." China-cases were to be made of "soft wood and japanned or painted and partly gilt" and one "very proper for a lady's dressing-room may be made of any soft wood and japanned any color."

"The china-case when carried out in the Chinese taste was usually crowned with a pagoda-shaped dome, a treatment extended to any wings abutting on the main or central portion of the body. The case proper was glazed, the glass being contained in lattice-work of a more or less Eastern character. Generally speaking these models rested on legs and feet, the decoration to which was in keeping with the rest of the scheme. From the eaves of the pagoda hung little ivory ornaments and the general effect arrived at suited the china of the period admirably. It would almost seem as though Chippendale had realized that of all the porcelain that had been produced or were to come, none would blend with his productions so happily as did those of the Oriental school."[1]

Ince and Mayhew also made china-cabinets and china-shelves in the fantastic "Chinese taste" of the day which

[1] Wheeler.

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are so like Chippendale's productions that it is almost impossible to distinguish them.

The French corner-cabinets, or *encoignures*, of which a beautiful example of late Louis XV. is shown on Plate LXII., were also of great importance during the Eighteenth Century in both England and France.

The Commode

The *commode*, the last transformation of the *cabinet*, was a very important piece of furniture in the Seventeenth and, more particularly, Eighteenth Century. Its place was in the drawing-room or bedroom. The *commode* is breast-high, stands on four feet, and is supplied with two long drawers. Exactly when it received its name is not known; for it does not appear in the first edition of the *Dictionnaire de l'Académie* (1694). Some people like to associate it with the headdress called *Commode*, introduced by Mademoiselle Fontange, and universally worn at the end of the Seventeenth and beginning of the Eighteenth Century, but its name was probably chosen to denote its usefulness. It appears in early French inventories as *bureau de commode* and *bureau en commode*.

It appears in the prints of Bérain, who died in 1711; but its name must have been in general use before that time, as it constantly appears in inventories. It 1708, the room of the Duc d'Orléans, at Versailles, contained "a *bureau-commode* in walnut, with two long drawers fastened with locks."

The great French cabinet-makers seem to have had a special affection for this form. Boulle's *commode en tombeau* was famous and the great swelling curve of this tomb-like form also occurs in his *commodes à panse* (paunch chests).

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PLATE LXVI

Louis XVI. Half-Moon *Commode* made by L. Moreau

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A *commode* of Louis XIV. period shown on Plate XXVI. is characteristic Boulle work, ornamented with splendid gilt-bronze mounts. The corners are adorned with bold and beautiful acanthus leaves forming scrolls. Three mascarons decorate the ends and base; and the handles of the drawers are formed of lions' heads with rings in their mouths. The gilt key-plates are also beautifully chiselled. This fine piece is in the Wallace Gallery in London. The earliest *commodes* are masterpieces of cabinet-work. The rarest woods were employed in their manufacture and they were enriched with inlays of mother-of-pearl, tortoise-shell and marquetry of colored woods and adorned with chiselled and gilt metal mounts and ornate leaf-shoes or carved and gilded feet. Handsome gilded figures often ornamented the corners and the mascaron or *espagnolette* decorated the centre of the drawers.

The *espagnolette,* it may be noted, is the name for the woman's head surrounded by a plaited ruff which is so frequently used for decoration by the masters of the Louis XIV. period. A very fine example appears on the *commode* on Plate XXVI.

The *commodes* of the Regency period were more elegant in form and less loaded with ornamentation. The chiselled bronze mounts were more restrained and stand out on a background of rosewood or amaranth, or some other rare exotic wood.

The metal-mounts were beautifully treated, especially by Caffieri. About this time, too, the Martins enriched these *commodes* with their beautiful paintings representing Chinese landscapes and scenes in imitation of Chinese lacquer. These panels were most exquisitely framed in borders of pierced metal, the chief motives of which were shells and scrolls. The slab was, as a rule, made of choice and costly marble; marble, beautifully colored and beautifully veined.

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Cressent made *Commodes à la Regence, à la Chartres, à la Bagnolet, à la Charolais, à la Harant* and *à la Dauphine;* and the "bow-shaped," which he describes as *en arbalète,* was one of his favorites. One of his *commodes* was described by the maker in 1761, when it was sold, as follows: "A commode of a pleasing contour, made of violet-wood, having four drawers and ornamented with bronze-gilt (*or moulu*). This *commode* is a work (with regard to the bronzes) of extraordinary richness; they are very well executed, and the distribution of them very fine; among other things, you notice the bust of a Spanish woman placed between the four drawers; two dragons, whose tails turned up in relief form the handles for the two upper drawers, and the stems of two great leaves of a beautiful form are also turned up in relief to make handles for the two lower ones; you must admit that this *commode* is a veritable curiosity."

This description agrees perfectly with the example in the Wallace Gallery. The superb *commode* in the same Collection, by Caffieri, is one of the best specimens of the application of bronze decoration to furniture. With Caffieri, architecture is entirely subordinate to ornamentation; and this fine piece is a study of the art of the metal-worker.

The example shown on Plate LXIII. is a *commode* with two drawers in marquetry of colored woods, the design being of floral boughs and birds. The handles, key-plates, ornamental mouldings and leaf-shoes are of bronze, in *rocaille.* The slab is of marble. This handsome piece, which is almost perfect in proportion and extreme beauty of line, is a splendid example of the Louis XV. age. It is signed L. Boudin.

The elegant little Regency bureau (Plate LXIV.) was made for Louis XV. when a child. It is decorated with branch and foliage design of copper on tortoise-shell; the

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PLATE LXVII

Bureau of Marie de'Medici

Cluny Museum

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eagle claw-feet and other metal enrichments are of gilt bronze.

Sometimes at this period the lower part of an *armoire* was used as a *commode*, just as the lower part of an Eighteenth Century "high-boy" is also used to-day as a dressing-table.

Chippendale, who copied everything that was fashionable in France, made *commodes* which he calls "French commode tables," "commode bureau-tables," and "buroe dressing-tables." In his examples the drawers frequently reach to the floor. He decorated them profusely with leafy scrolls and light dripping water effects.

As the reign of Louis XV. comes to a close, and the new taste for the straight line asserts itself, the low-shaped and *bombé commode* gives place to a piece of furniture that returns to the chest in its rectangular lines. The *commode* now stands on grooved feet; sometimes it has doors, and sometimes long drawers; few lacquered commodes are made, and marquetry gradually gives place to panels ornamented with a vase of flowers or trophies inlaid in the centre, or plain panels framed in a delicately chased bronze moulding and adorned with a central metal ornament. Sometimes plaques of Sèvres porcelain are used instead of panels of wood.

The cabinet-makers and designers all loved this form, and lavished all the resources of their skill and rich materials upon its composition.

The *commodes* that Riesener made at the end of the reign of Louis XV. are of two types. The richer form is somewhat similar to the form of his desks; the central part of the body beautifully decorated with marquetry or a medallion of chiselled bronze. The very low feet are encased in a leaf-shoe, or end in only a scroll. The moulding is enriched with metal work in the form of roses, garlands,

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ovolos, or flutings. The simpler *commodes* are less sumptuous regarding the use of marquetry and bronze; are shaped like a massive coffer; and stand on very low curved feet, which hardly seem to belong to the piece of furniture, so awkwardly do they jut from the corners.

During the Louis XVI. period Riesener made a series of *commodes* that are models of taste and execution. In the centre he placed a panel of marquetry of wood representing attributes of the field or bouquets of flowers, and on each side panels inlaid in lozenges, which set off the principal subject. Upon the moulding a row of floral crowns develops for a frieze, while figures of caryatides or Corinthian columns rising out of the leaf-shoe of copper form the uprights of the sides. Other of his *commodes* are entirely covered with flowers and fruits that stand out from the panels of old Chinese lacquer.

The *commodes* made at this period by Heppelwhite were often shaped like half of a drum and were of satin-wood, richly inlaid. Sheraton's *commodes* were also exceedingly rich. In a description of a drawing-room, when he was under the influence of the Louis XVI. taste, Sheraton wrote: "The *commode* opposite the fire-place has four doors; its legs are intended to stand a little clear of the wings; and the top is marble to match the pier-tables. In the frieze part of the *commode* is a tablet in the centre made of an exquisite composition in imitation of statuary marble. These are to be had of any figure, or on any subject, at Mr. Wedgwood's, near Soho Square. They are let into the wood, and project a little forward. The *commode* should be painted to suit the furniture, and the legs and other parts in gold, to harmonize with the sofas, tables and chairs."

Riesener's rival, Benneman, produced many *commodes*. Some of these are now in Fontainebleau and the Garde-Meuble; their forms already announce the imitation of

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PLATE LXVIII

Bureau by Riesener
Wallace Gallery

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heavy classic models soon to invade French art; but whose decorative metal mounts rank among the best French work. One of Benneman's achievements in this line was an enormous *commode* in mahogany in the form of the lower part of an *armoire* with terminal figures of women at the corners of gilded bronze.

In the Louis XVI. period the rounded forms of the *commode* gave way to the straight line. Some had doors, and others had only drawers; these were called *commodes tombeaux*. They stood on short, upright legs. "*Commodes* were used more and more in furnishing bedrooms. They were made of four and sometimes five drawers one above another; naturally the legs lost some of their height, and the floral *placages* were supplanted by mouldings garnished with chiselled bronze, marquetry woods were replaced by mahogany, amaranth and even walnut, but few were made of palissandre. Two regular handles were used on each drawer on either side of a central keyhole; the tops were almost always of marble." [1]

Louis XVI. Style

"A half moon" mahogany *commode* is shown on Plate LXVI. with three drawers in front and a little cupboard and drawer at each side. It is mounted with gilt bronze ornaments and has a marble top. This piece was made by L. Moreau.

Commodes were proscribed during the Directoire and Empire, as they were considered out of keeping with antique furniture. Their exclusion did not become general, and did not last long. People had to return to this useful piece of furniture. The *commode*, however, never recovered its former elegance, and, thereafter was only a piece of heavy mahogany furniture slightly ornamented with metal-work,

[1] Deville.

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which decoration, after a time, disappeared altogether. *Commode* dressing-tables and *commode* writing-desks are still made. No piece of furniture is more prized by the collector than a fine specimen of the Seventeenth or Eighteenth Centuries.

The Bureau

The word *bureau* seems to have been used before the Seventeenth Century to describe a table or a counter covered with a rough kind of cloth called *drap de bure*. About 1650, upon it was placed a little box with drawers supplied with a flap to let down. In other words the Spanish cabinet — the *vargueño* — became the desk. (See Plate LVIII.)

The *bureau* of Maréchal de Créqui and that belonging to Marie de' Medici, both in the Cluny Museum, are splendid examples of the type of *bureau* that dates from the first half of the Seventeenth Century. They are of rosewood incrusted with copper, shell, and other metal in the style that Boulle brought to such perfection. The Créqui piece dates from 1638 and is really a cabinet standing on a table supplied with drawers. The second piece, which tradition gives to Marie de' Medici, is mounted on eight balusters with capitals joined four on each side by stretches, and supplied with two drawers on each side of the table, and surmounted by an upper box composed of eight drawers and a panel that opens. (See Plate LXVIII.)

There seems to have been very little, if any, difference between the *bureau* and *bureau en commode*. The Duchess of Orleans, for instance, had a walnut *commode* three feet seven inches long and two feet wide, having three drawers with iron rings, and the Duke had a *bureau en commode*, three feet, five inches long, with two drawers with iron rings. Madame de Maintenon owned a walnut bureau inlaid with

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PLATE LXIX

Eighteenth Century American Desk and Bookcase

Metropolitan Museum

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ebony, with seven drawers on each side, each having copper-gilt key-plates. (See Plate LXV.)

The *bureau,* however, was a desk, while the *commode* was more of a dressing-table.

In the reign of Louis XV. the long bureau table was a favorite form of furniture, and sometimes at one end of it was placed a case of shelves, drawers, or pigeon-holes that was known as *serre-papiers.* Sometimes the *serre-papiers* was surmounted by a clock. (See Plate CX.)

The *bureau* or desk was of great importance in this reign, when the roll-top or cylinder bureau was invented or made popular by the Prince de Kaunitz, Maria Theresa's ambassador to France, from which it derived its name, "*bureau à la Kaunitz.*" To this reign belongs the famous *bureau du roi,* which most critics consider the most beautiful piece of furniture of the Eighteenth Century. It was ordered for Louis XV. from J. F. Œben who died before it was finished. Riesener completed the work and placed his signature upon it in 1769. How much Riesener did upon it is not known. Before Œben died, however, the model in wood was constructed and the bronzes had been modelled and cast by Duplessis, Winant and Hervieux; but the piece had to be brought together as a complete whole, the marquetry was not made, and the cylinder had to be combined.

The *bureau du roi* is five and a half feet long and three feet in depth. It is made of rosewood and amaranth, richly decorated with Riesener's best marquetry, representing flowers, leaves and attributes of royalty and poetry. The *or moulu* mountings are magnificent. There are swags of leaves, laurel wreaths, knots of ribbon, an open-worked gallery placed on a horizontal ornament of rods twined with ribbons, above the cylinder top, broken in the centre by a clock upon which two Cupids are playing, and on each side of the cylinder is a reclining figure of gilt bronze holding

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a flower that is intended for a candlestick. The back of this bureau is as finely decorated as the front. The whole work is admired for its form, its beautiful proportions, its fine lines, its simplicity, its *or moulu* work, its marquetry and the exquisite workmanship it represents.

This *bureau* was in the Tuileries in 1807; was removed to the Palace of St. Cloud by Napoleon III., and from there to the Louvre in 1870.

A similar *bureau* was made for Stanislaus, King of Poland, and also a copy by Zwiener of Paris is in the Wallace Collection. (See Plate LXVIII.) Other reproductions were made of this work and many other fine *bureaux* also went from Riesener's workshop, large and small, more or less decorated with bronzes, all of which prove how greatly this form was liked. A cylinder *bureau* of Riesener's second style, long at Trianon, is now in the *Musée du Mobilier national*. This is decorated in his favorite lozenge-shaped marquetry and ornamented with bronze.

A superb *bureau* made by Dubois, who frequently worked from designs by Pineau, is in the Wallace Collection. The desk and *cartonnier* are in green lacquer, ornamented with chiselled bronze, the feet being sirens and the *serre-papiers* surmounted by figures of Cupid, Psyche, Peace and War. This bureau was said to have been a present from Louis XV. to Catherine II. of Russia. To this period also belongs the delicate little desk or bureau designed especially for the boudoir and called *bonheur du jour*. It closed with doors, or a flap, which, when let down, formed the writing table. Behind the flap was an array of pigeon-holes and drawers which were generally lined with blue velvet. The *bonheur du jour* was variously ornamented with marquetry, or plaques of Sèvres porcelain, and adorned with delicate *or moulu* mounts.

The desk that became popular in Queen Anne's day,

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PLATE LXX

Louis XVI. Secretary. Mahogany with Bronze-gilt Ornamentation

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standing on a frame supported on four cabriole legs, and with slanting flap that, when let down and supported on slides or rests, forms the table for writing, is precisely the same form; but it is interesting to see how much heavier the Anglo-Dutch writing-desk or "scriptor" is than its French relative. Instead of the gilt leaf-shoe, we have here the claw-and-ball foot, and the old cabinet arrangement of pigeon-holes and drawers is designed to hold documents and more serious correspondence than the perfumed missives of a Pompadour or a Du Barry.

This, however, was not the only *bureau* of the period. Another form is the simple one as shown on Plate LXVII., and another brings us back to the old *armoire* in two parts; the lower one consisting of a series of drawers reaching to the floor, while the upper part is a combination of bookcase and writing-desk (see Plate LXIX.).

Chippendale designed a great deal of library furniture; and many of his bookcases which follow the forms of the ancient *armoire* are combinations of bookcases and desks, and follow in the style of their ornamentation "the Gothic or the Chinese taste." Some of the bookcases contain a writing-drawer. One writing-table and bookcase for a lady has "the middle feet come out with the drawer, which hath a slider covered with green cloth or Spanish leather for writing upon."

Chippendale's bookcase, with glass doors, is much used to-day for the display of china. The base generally contains cupboards or drawers and sometimes the arrangement consists of a cupboard in the centre with a tier of drawers in each wing. The broken pediment often surmounts the cornice. Chippendale's lattice-like traceries for the glass panes are very decorative and very varied. He published a great number of designs for these.

Heppelwhite made desks after the styles that had become

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fashionable in his day. He made combination desks and bookcases and generally of mahogany, with drawers and internal conveniences of great variety. He also varied the patterns of the bookcase doors. "On the top, when ornamented," he says, "is placed between a scroll of foliage a vase, bust, or other ornament which may be of mahogany, or gilt, or of light-colored wood." He also made cylinder-shaped desks and often used a tambour-shutter with which to close them. In this shutter the reeds were horizontally placed, a form familiar now in the commonest office-desks.

Sheraton was also fond of the ornamental glass door for his bookcases, china cabinets and cupboards; but, as a rule, he instructed his customers to place green, pink, or white silk behind the glass. Many of his bookcases are a return to the ancient type of *armoire à deux corps,* the lower part being a desk and the upper part a series of shelves enclosed by wings, or a series of pigeon-holes and compartments. The example from the Metropolitan Museum on Plate LXIX. shows this form.

Plate LXX. and Plate LXXI. take us back to the old cabinet on a stand of the form shown on Plate LXIX.; although both are secretaries. The first is a secretary of the Louis XVI. period, made of mahogany and decorated with medallions representing children, garlands of leaves, ribbons, friezes, and *cul-de-lampe* of bronze gilt. The second piece is an Empire writing-desk with delicate bronze ornaments.

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PLATE LXXI

Empire Secretary
Metropolitan Museum

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III

THE BED

THERE still exists in the *selamlik* of a Turkish mansion, the wooden house of a Syriac Christian, and in the tent of a rich sheik, the same bed, — a long cushion laid sometimes on a wooden divan, and sometimes on a crazy framework of timber or cane. This bed resembles the Egyptian couch, — a cushion placed on a framework, generally in the shape of an animal, whose back served as the resting-place for the outstretched body.



EGYPTIAN COUCHES

Beds are described in the Bible: that of Og, King of Bashan, was nine cubits long and four cubits broad. Beds of gold and silver are spoken of in the book of *Esther;* Herodotus mentions beds of silver and gold which he saw in the temples; and a bed with a tester is recorded in *Judith* xvi. 23, which, in connection with rich tapestries, hung about a bed for ornament and luxury, proves that the ancient Hebrews understood something about the comforts for sleeping.

In the heroic age of Greece the people slept on heaps of skins or leaves, but in Homer's time they possessed beds. Some of the sleeping apartments of the Greeks were small and airless, mere cells, in fact; but they had sofas and truckle-beds of considerable comfort, and at an early period the four-posted bedstead. Beds with foot and headboard also became known. A bedroom in a wealthy Athenian villa

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is thus described: "Before the door hangs a costly carpet, woven in variegated colors on a Babylonian loom. The bedstead is of maple, veneered (some are of bronze, at a later period tortoise-shell), at the top there is fastened an ornamented board to support the head; girths are stretched across to support the mattress, which is covered with linen and sometimes with cloth or leather. The stuffing is of wool or leaves; a striped cushion, filled with feathers, forms the pillow. Clothes like the modern blanket are used, surmounted by a splendid coverlet from Miletus, or Corinth, or Carthage, where a brisk trade was carried on in the manufacture of these articles of luxury. In cold weather furs are used, stuffed coverlets too, sometimes like the eider-down beds of Germany. The feet of the bedstead peep forth from under the rich coverlet and are of carved ivory. The floor is covered with Asiatic carpet; a table of veneered maple, with three goats' feet of bronze, is placed by the bedstead, and in one of the corners of the apartment is a Corinthian tripod containing a copper coal pan to warm the room in chilly weather."



GREEK BEDSTEAD

Previous to their subjugation of the East, the Romans slept on planks covered with straw, moss, or dried leaves; but, when Asiatic luxuries were introduced into the imperial city, the wealthy citizens furnished their sleeping apartments in a sumptuous manner with large carved bedsteads and couches of ivory or rare Indian woods inlaid with gold, amber, or tortoise-shell. The feet of these were often of gold or silver, and the mattress was filled with wool or feathers, and covered with a soft material having alternate stripes of white and violet sprinkled with gilt stars. Blankets were often used, purple being the favorite color; and these

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PLATE LXXII

Dutch Renaissance Carved Oak Bedstead with Painted Leather Ceiling (1650)

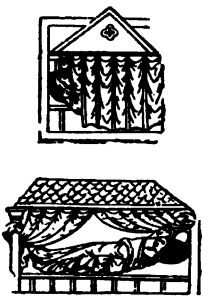
Metropolitan Museum

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were richly embroidered with devices wrought in gold. Over them were thrown counterpanes of the most beautiful furs and richest stuffs. Curtains and canopies were not unknown; and sometimes steps were placed by the side of the bed for the occupant to ascend easily upon the heap of luxurious cushions.

In the early Anglo-Saxon homes the bedstead was a rarity except for kings, queens and other great personages; but as time wore on and the country became more calm and secure, the habits of the people also corresponded. The "parloir," or talking-room, was added; fireplaces of stone-work or bricks were made in rooms where previously the smoke had been allowed to escape through a hole in the roof; and bedsteads were draped with curtains.



ANGLO-SAXON BEDS, TENTH CENTURY

The Mediæval upholsterer realized that a large room where bitter winds entered through the lancet windows could be rendered comfortable for sleeping only by the protection of a bed hung with heavy curtains, and so the curtains are of the utmost importance.

For example, the "embroidered chamber" of Jane of Burgundy, Queen of Philip V., at her coronation at Rheims in 1330 was ornamented with 1321 parrots with the arms of the King, and 1321 butterflies with the arms of Burgundy.

In the Middle Ages the word "*chambre*" was used to describe the entire set of hangings and curtains that adorned the bedroom, and these were frequently changed every season like the altar-cloths and vestments of the church and clergy. The rooms were named, too, after the various seasons of the church, or the subjects of the tapestry that adorned them. Beautiful Byzantine tapestry, with other

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hangings and carpets, was brought into Western Europe by those returning from the First Crusade (1096–1099), and after 1146, when Count Robert of Sicily brought home from his expedition into Greece some silk-workers and established a manufactory at Palermo, fine brocades and damasks were carried northward from Italy. During the Thirteenth Century tapestries came into general use for hangings in private mansions, and the looms of France and the Netherlands produced the most wonderful works. Subjects from Grecian mythology and heroic legends became as popular as those taken from the Bible.



IRON BEDSTEAD, TENTH CENTURY

Arras was so celebrated early in the Fourteenth Century that the name soon became generic; the Italians called all woven tapestries *Arazzi;* the Spaniards, *Panos de raz;* and the English, *Arras.* Hamlet killed Polonius "behind the arras." Philip the Good, Duke of Burgundy, owned in 1420 five chambers of tapestry, one of which was of Arras make, called the "Chamber of the little children." The canopy, headboard and coverlet of the bed, were worked with gold and silk, "the headboard and coverlet being strewn with trees, grasses and little children, and the canopy representing trails of flowering rose trees on a red background." Another, called "The Chamber of the Coronation of Our Lady," was furnished with a canopy, a headboard, a bed, coverlet and six curtains, two of which were worked with gold, and the remaining four without gold.

The same prince had also many chambers of velvet and silk embroidered with gold and silks. Mary of Burgundy, who was married to the Duke of Cleves in 1415, had in her dowry a "superb bed of tapestry representing a deer hunt."

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PLATE LXXIII

Early Seventeenth Century Bedstead (*Lit-en-housse*)

Corsini Palace, Florence

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The Bed

The miniatures of Mediæval manuscripts often give representations of interiors, and to them we must go to ascertain exactly what the furniture of this period looked like. The bedstead, in nearly all cases, is nothing but a long chest on short legs, with a mattress and pillows, with the curtains and canopy suspended from the rafters by cords. Often the panels of the bedstead are of the favorite linen-fold pattern, as is the decoration of the chair that stands by its side. The seat of this "*prie-dieu*" chair, as it has been called, lifted up, disclosing a box in which the devotional books were kept.

In very wealthy houses the bedroom was frequently hung with splendid tapestry, or embroidered materials. A handsome bedroom of the Twelfth Century is described by Baudri, Abbé de Bourgueil, in a poem dedicated to Adela, the daughter of William the Conqueror. Tapestry of silk, silver and gold forms the only decoration of the walls. One set depicts Chaos, the Creation and Fall of Man, the Death of Abel and the Deluge; another set represents Biblical scenes from the time of Noah to the Kings of Judea; and a third set, scenes from Roman history and Grecian mythology. A hanging representing the Conquest of England (much in the style of the Bayeux Tapestry) decorated the alcove in which stood the bed of the Princess. The bedstead was ornamented with three groups of statues, representing Philosophy with Music, Astronomy, Arithmetic and Geometry; Rhetoric with Logic and Grammar; and Medicine with Galen and Hippocrates. The ceiling of the bedstead imitated the sky with the seven planets and constellations. The mosaic floor represented a map of the world with the seas, rivers, mountains and chief cities.



BED OF THE TWELFTH CENTURY

At an early period the nations of Western Europe knew

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the bed with headboard and footboard, and tester supported on four posts, with canopies resembling the roof of a house, and with curtains hanging from the cornice or arranged in the form of a tent. The coldness of the houses rendered curtains a necessity. As time wore on, the canopy, curtains and other furnishings became more luxurious. The canopy was often attached to the wall and the bed was placed under it. The richly embroidered curtains could be looped back or closely drawn, as the sleeper pleased. By this time, the bed had become a valuable possession, not solely because of its handsome frame and canopy, but owing to its "furniture" — its down pillows and coverlets, its soft mattresses of down and feathers or "flock," its lavender-scented sheets bleached in the dew or moonshine, its counterpanes of wadded scarlet silk, embroidered satin, cloth of gold, or vair, or miniver, and its heavy curtains.

In the Fourteenth Century the bed-chamber was of great importance, for kings received their courtiers and granted audiences in their sleeping-apartments, leaving the great hall for festivities and ceremonials of occasion and state.

Going to bed in Mediæval times was something of a ceremony for both knight and king. It took the latter quite a long time to prepare himself for the night. First, a page took a torch and went to the wardrobe where the bedding was kept. The articles were brought out by the keeper to four yeomen, who made the bed, while the page held the torch at the foot. One of the yeomen searched the straw with his dagger, and when he found there was no evil thing hidden there he laid a bed of down on the straw and threw himself upon it. Then the bed of down was well beaten and a bolster laid in the proper place. The sheets were spread, and over them a fustian. Over this a "pane-sheet," which we now call a counterpane. Then the sheets were turned down and pillows laid on the bolster, after which

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PLATE LXXIV

Bed of the Maréchal d'Effiat

Cluny Museum

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the yeomen made a cross and kissed the bed. An angel carved in wood was placed beside the bed, and the curtains let down. After this, a gentleman usher brought the king's sword and placed it at the bed's head, and a groom, or page, was put in custody of the apartment, which he watched with a light burning until the king retired to rest.

Notwithstanding their massiveness, these beds were sometimes carried from place to place. For example, a bed belonging to Richard III. was taken by him to the Blue Boar, Leicester, the night before the battle of Bosworth, in 1485. Richard was slain in this battle, and as the bed was unclaimed, the innkeeper held possession of it. A hundred years later a chambermaid while sweeping struck the bottom accidentally and some gold pieces fell out. The bottom, the headboard and the great swelling pillars were found to be hollow and full of money of the time of King Richard. Old beds are rare and are much prized by the museums that own them. The Louvre has a valuable Venetian bed of the Fifteenth Century, a handsome though heavy composition. It stands on lions' feet, has grooved columns, and a canopy bordered with a frieze of foliage. The carving is gilt and stands out boldly from a background of blue.

Pictures and prints give the best idea of the Italian furniture of this age. The beautiful bed and charming bedroom in Carpaccio's *Dream of St. Ursula* is a correct representation of a bedstead of the Fifteenth Century.

Peter Flötner copied a Venetian bed from a plate in the *Dream of Polyphilus* (Venice, 1499), and made the Venetian bed popular. This bed had slender balusters standing on lions' paws and supporting the canopy. This type of bed was much used in France during the Renaissance; but the baluster columns were soon supplanted by caryatides. In the famous example in the Cluny Museum, dating from the period of François I. and represented on Plate XI., the

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transition between the balusters and caryatides is very noticeable. The balusters at the foot are very much carved and those on each side of the headboard are antique figures, — a mixture of Du Cerceau and Burgundian carving.

The beds are in various styles, — some are rectangular, have a back, a daïs supported by four balusters, and feet carved in the form of griffins, or chimæræ. Other examples are narrower at the feet than at the head, and are shaped like flat-bottomed boats. Three balusters, carved in the form of human figures, two at the head and one at the foot, usually uphold the daïs.

The bed was superb in the Sixteenth Century. It consisted of four posts and a frame, four feet, a canopy, a headboard and curtains. It depended for its elegance very largely upon its magnificent hangings, though the woodwork was carved, and frequently gilded, painted, or inlaid.

In the time of Renaissance, we find the bedstead of supreme importance. It is carved in the richest fashion, and is often enriched with gilding and painting; it is also adorned with marquetry. The mattresses, bolsters and pillows are of down or feathers, the sheets and blankets of finest linen and wool, for which Flanders is famous; and the hangings are of silk, velvet, tapestry, serge, or gilded leather. The Renaissance bed is never allowed to stand in an alcove: it is far too handsome a piece of furniture for that. Its canopy, often richly carved, is rectangular and exactly the size of the bed, which is large; and it is no longer suspended by cords from the ceiling, but rests on carved or grooved columns. It is usually finished with a projecting cornice, variously ornamented, and to this cornice the curtains are attached. The old box bed was not extinct as is proved by our example on Plate LXXII. This beautiful Renaissance bed is owned by the Metropolitan Museum of New York.

In almost all cases, the frame of the bed was a perfect

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PLATE LXXV

Eighteenth Century American Bedstead

Metropolitan Museum

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square resting on four carved ball feet, the frame handsomely carved. At each corner rose a pillar to support the canopy; the headboard was carved, and behind it hung a piece of tapestry or damask similar to that which lined the *ciel*, or canopy. Later in the century, the columns were frequently enveloped in the same material as the hangings, which became so important that the sculptor and joiner gave place to the upholsterer and embroiderer. The beds were so high, or built so high with mattresses, that it was impossible to get into them without the aid of bed-steps.

In the second half of the Sixteenth Century the slender columns that supported the canopy were supplanted by posts of massive carving. Sometimes these posts are gaîne-shaped figures. Caryatides often appear as columns; and sometimes slender pillars cut in the form of balusters, lances or distaffs. Some of these are grooved and some of these are more or less decorated with carving.

The bed of the Princess Palatine Susanna, preserved in the Museum at Munich, and dated 1530, is of the slender type (see Plate X.).

The camp-bed, or folding-bed, that appears so often in the early inventories, was often a four-poster and a very handsome piece of furniture. We hear of a bed in 1550 "in the form of a camp-bed, painted in gold and blue — the canopy, headboard, curtains, coverings, base and four pillars of scarlet red, the lining of the canopy, crimson velvet, and the fringes of red silk and gold thread"; also a camp-bed, "the canopy and hangings of green velvet, bearing the arms of the owner and trimmed with fringe of green silk and gold"; also a "bed in the form of a camp-bed, with great gilded pillars supporting a canopy which was covered like the headboard with cloth-of-gold and crimson velvet." The coverings were the same, lined with red taffeta and three curtains of crimson damask.

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The magnificent beds in the Palace in Nancy in 1544 included one of cloth of gold and silver; another of white damask, with patterns of gold thread, silver thread and blue silk; another of violet velvet with silver fringe; another of black velvet; another of black velvet and crimson satin; another of black velvet, yellow velvet and crimson satin; another of yellow satin with lilies in cloth of silver; another of crimson satin and cloth of gold; another of cloth of gold, blue satin and cloth of silver; another of gold damask, crimson satin and cloth of silver.

Margaret of Austria, Regent of the Netherlands and wife of Philibert of Savoy, owned in 1523 a camp, or folding-bed, with hangings of cloth of gold embroidered with gold thread and silk; also a canopy for a camp-bed covered with cloth of gold and trimmed with a fringe of black silk and gold threads; and a canopy counterpane and three curtains of green taffeta lined with black and a "*pavillon* as a protection against flies, which was made of threads of grey and yellow silk."

Handsome beds in France, as well as in England, had special names. Among the possessions of the Crown was one called the "England Bed" (*lit d'Angleterre*) because the arms of England were embroidered upon it. The hangings were violet velvet and cloth of gold. Another bed was called "*lit des satyrs*," because Diana and her nymphs and satyrs were embroidered upon it, and another was called "*lit de Melusine*," because Melusine was represented on the headboard as bathing in a fountain.

The massive Elizabethan bedstead lasted long. It is a good example of the style. Oliver Cromwell's bed and the Great Bed of Ware was so large that it could hold twelve persons. The Tudor bed was superb: it was richly carved on headboard, canopy, tester, columns and panels, and the columns or posts were also a mass of carving. Often they

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Plate LXXVI

Louis XVI. Bedstead. Gilt Frame with Tapestry Panels and Curtains of White Silk

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swelled out into the acorn-shaped bulb and sometimes at the sides of the headboard stood terminal figures of men or women, or angels that were intended for supports for looping back the curtains. Many of these carved oak bedsteads were imported from Flanders. The sheets were of the finest linen, the blankets were soft and fine, the counterpane was of marvellous needlework, and there were quilts of silk and rugs of fur to make the sleeper luxuriously comfortable. The richest curtains were of silk, satin, velvet, samite or tapestry, and the less expensive ones of serge, linsey-woolsey, or kidderminster. Scarlet cloth was also used, and kidderminster flowered green and white was another favorite hanging. The favorite colors were red, green, yellow, and blue. White was little used.

In Scone Palace, Perthshire, there is a bed that Mary Stuart slept in, which is draped with hangings that she is said to have worked while at Lochleven.

Under the big bed, which sometimes stood upon a low platform, the trundle, or truckle, bed was rolled in the daytime. It was pulled out at night.

Early in the Seventeenth Century, the bed in which upholstery had superseded carving had been growing in favor, and the *lit en housse*, as it was called, became the typical bed of this period. It is the one that appears in Abraham Bosse's engravings whenever a bed is introduced in the homes of the tradesmen and school-teachers, in hospitals, as well as in the homes of the rich. The framework of this style of bed is of comparatively little importance. The canopy or *ciel* is supported on four posts which are carved or painted or covered with the same material as the curtains. Beneath the valance and under the curtains a rod ran for the support of the curtains which were drawn up or down by means of cords and pulleys. The handsomest beds were draped with tapestry, silk damask, brocade, or velvet, often edged with

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a narrow silk fringe, or a fringe of gold or silver, and often were trimmed with gold or silver lace or braid, and sometimes cord and tassels. For less expensive beds, the curtains were made of serge, cloth or linen, or cotton materials, or East India goods, and lined with silk, or less rich material. The four corners of the canopy were adorned with a carved or turned wooden ornament, or knob called a "*pomme*," which was often gilded or painted, a bunch of feathers, or a "bouquet" made of ravelled silk threads.

A characteristic bed of this kind is shown on Plate LXXIII., dating from the early Seventeenth Century. It is from the Corsini Palace, Florence, and is of the style of beds shown in Abraham Bosse's prints and familiar throughout Europe. (See also Plate LXXIV.)

Another typical bed of this period was the *lit de baldaquin*. This had no columns or posts, and the baldachin was slightly smaller than the bed over which it was hung. If a dome surmounted the baldachin, the bed was called the *lit à l'impériale*. The "*pavillon*" bed was probably very similar.

When New England, New York and Virginia were settled, during the first quarter of the Seventeenth Century, the prevailing style of household furniture was early Jacobean.

The most typical room in the home of average means was the hall, which, in general, was used as a sitting-room, drawing-room, and bedroom. Even in the wealthiest homes of the early settlers of this country, the bed was scarcely ever absent in any room.

A bed of the earliest Louis XIV. Style was owned by Molière (1622–1673), for among the objects offered for sale after his death, we find: "A couch with feet representing eaglet's claws, painted a bronze green with a painted and gilded headboard; a canopy with an azure blue background, carved and gilded, with four eagles in relief, on

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PLATE LXXVII

Empire Bedstead

Metropolitan Museum

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gilded wood, four knobs shaped like vases, also of gilded wood; the canopy draped inside with gold and green taffeta; the valances of the bed, same material, all finished off with gold and green fringes. A smaller canopy within the larger one, of gilded wood, carved to represent a bell, draped outside with grey taffeta embroidered with gold twist, finished off with gold silk fringe, and lined with Avignon taffeta. Inside hangings of the same taffeta with fringe." The celebrated actor and playwright also had "a little couch of joiner's wood with a border of gilded wood and feet representing eaglet's claws." This was supplied with two mattresses, one of which was covered with green satin with a floral design; and a bolster, similarly covered. This was valued at 100 livres. A similar couch with two bolsters, two mattresses and two pillows, all covered with satin, was valued at 140 livres.

The *lit en housse* continued into the reign of Louis XIV.; but the typical bed in this period was devoid of columns, and was known as the *lit d'ange.* The curtains were looped back, and the canopy, which was the same width as the bed, was not so long. The bed was furnished with a headboard, but not a footboard. Squares of drapery that repeated the same trimmings as the valance around the *ciel,* or canopy, were placed around the mattress to form a lower valance. The counterpane was stretched tightly across the bed and a round bolster was placed at the headboard. Pillows were never used. Behind the headboard, a straight piece of drapery hung from the canopy, which was decorated with *pommes* or knobs. The *lit d'ange* was generally about 11 feet high, 6 feet wide and 7 feet long. The *lit d'ange* continued in fashion for about a hundred years.

Another variety was the *lit à la duchesse,* which was like the *lit d'ange* with one exception, — the canopy had to cover the entire bed (though occasionally we come across a *lit à la*

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duchesse with *demi ciel*). The *pavillon* bed and the *lit à l'impériale* also continued in fashion. The King owned a superb *impériale* of yellow damask, embroidered in silver in a charming design of leaves, berries and seeds. The trimming was a fringe of reddish purple chenille of the shade that was so fashionable then, called amaranth.

The bed was always *vu de pied*, that is to say, it stood out in the room with the head against the wall.

The Louis XIV. Style crossed the Channel as the *style refugié* (see page 53).

The Marot bed depended upon upholstery for its splendor. The bedstead consisted of a light frame supporting a canopy on the four corners of which the "*pomme*" still held its place. In this period, it not only consisted of a wooden or gilded apple, or knob, but often a bunch of ostrich feathers. The canopy, curtains, valance, and counterpane were of brocade, silk, satin, velvet, chintz, or white dimity worked in colored crewels, or worsted. Three beds of this period are still in Hampton Court Palace. William's bed, which is about fifteen feet high, and covered with crimson damask; Mary's, which is smaller, and covered with crimson velvet; and a much handsomer one called "Queen Anne's bed," which is upholstered in rich Genoa velvet of white ground, with designs of crimson and orange stamped or cut out upon it.



LIT-DE-CAMP, BY RADEL, 1765

In the days of Louis XV. the bed was placed opposite the windows, with its head against the wall, and, in very wealthy homes, frequently stood in an alcove behind a balustrade. According to D'Aviler, white and gold was the choicest decoration, particularly if the wall behind the balustrade, where the bed stood, was covered with blue silk. The bed

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PLATE LXXVIII

Sixteenth Century Italian Choir Stalls.
Metropolitan Museum

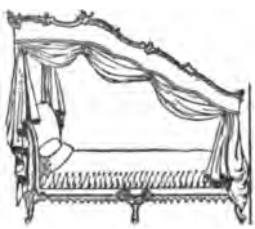
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itself was draped with curtains of blue and white silk, richly ornamented with gold braid. (See LXXV.)

In smaller apartments and simpler homes, the bed was frequently placed in a niche. Sometimes the bed stood with its head to the wall (*vu de pied*), and sometimes it was turned sideways, in which case a false bolster was placed at the footboard for the sake of symmetry. This bed, therefore, was called the *lit à deux chevets* (the two-bolster bed).

The boudoir generally contained an alcove, in which stood a sofa-bed, or "*lit de repos.*" The alcove was hung with draperies that matched the window-curtains. Beds were of many kinds. The great *lit d'ange* and the *lit à l'impériale* still continued popular; but the draperies followed the fashion of the day, and were looped up in festoons and ornamented with *choux*, or cabbage knots. Sofa and alcove-beds were more in demand than any others; and among them was the *lit d'anglaise*, which appeared in 1750. The *lit à la polonaise* was another favorite. It had four columns and a canopy; and the latter was decorated with a bunch of feathers at each corner and in the centre. The *lit en ottomane* was another sofa-bed, which dates from about 1765, and which had a dome and curtains; the *lit à romaine*, which became popular about 1760, had a canopy and four festooned curtains; the *lit à la turque*, popular from about 1755 to 1780, was a sort of sofa with three backs; the *lit à tulipe* and *lit à flèche* were so called because in the one case the curtains fell from a sort of bronze, copper, or gilded tulip, and in the other, from an ornamental arrow fixed to the pavilion. Last of all, there was the *lit à tombeau*, called in England the single-headed couch or field-bed, with a slanting canopy that was sup-



LIT-À-TOMBEAU, LOUIS XV.

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ported on four posts, the two at the head being much taller than those at the foot. The *lit à double tombeau* had posts of equal height, and the curtains fell down the sides in slants of equal length. These sofa-beds were smothered in draperies, gracefully looped or cut in points and scallops. Great use was made of tassels. Colors having become lighter than in the reign of Louis XIV., pale hues of blue, yellow, rose and green supplanted the heavier reds, greens, blues and purples.

Chippendale includes among his plates Dome-Beds, Canopy-Beds, Gothic Beds, Chinese Beds, Field-Beds, Tent-Beds, Couch-Beds, Sofa-Beds, as well as independent drawings for bedposts and cornices. His four-posted bedsteads are large: 7 feet 6 inches long; 6 feet 4 inches high; and 5 feet wide. A carved cornice surrounds the canopy, and contains hidden from sight an intricate arrangement of laths and pulleys by which the curtains are drawn and raised. Chippendale's pillars are always handsomely carved; his cornices are carved, gilt, painted or japanned and brightened with gold; and his draperies consist of the most elaborate festoons and curtains. A long, tightly-rolled bolster is always placed just below the headboard, and pillows are never used.

Some of Chippendale's sofas can be turned into beds when desired. He describes one as follows: "A Chinese Canopy, with Curtains and Valances tied up in Drapery, and may be converted into a Bed by making the front part of the seat to draw forward, and the sides made to fold and turn in with strong iron hinges and a proper stretcher to keep out and support the sides when open. The curtains must be likewise made to come forward, and when let down will form a Tent." Another is a "Chinese Sopha with a canopy over it, with its curtains and vallens all tied up in drapery. This design may be converted into a bed by having

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PLATE LXXIX

Sixteenth Century Flemish Arm-Chairs

Louvre

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the Sopha so made as to come forward, the curtains to draw to the front of the Sopha, and hang sloping, which will form a sort of tent, and look very grand. The ornaments are designed for burnished gold."

The framework of Heppelwhite beds is much lighter in appearance than Chippendale's.

According to Heppelwhite's *Cabinet-Maker and Upholsterer's Guide,* "Beds are an article of much importance, as well on account of the great expense attending them as the variety of shapes and the high degree of elegance attending them. They may be executed of almost every stuff the loom produces. White dimity, plain or corded, is peculiarly applicable for the furniture which, with a fringe or gymp-head, produces an effect of elegance and neatness truly agreeable. Printed cottons and linens are also very suitable, the elegance and variety of patterns of which afford as much scope for taste, elegance and simplicity as the most lively fancy can wish. In general the lining to these kinds of furniture is a plain white cotton." The same authority contains: "In state rooms where a high degree of elegance and grandeur are wanted, beds are frequently made of silk or satin, figured or plain, also of velvet with gold fringes," etc. The Vallance to elegant beds should always be gathered full, which is called a Petticoat Vallance. The cornices may be either of mahogany carved, carved and gilt, or painted and japanned. The ornaments over the cornices may be in the same manner, and carved and gilt, or japanned, will produce the most lively effect. Among Heppelwhite's designs were "Venetian, or waggon-top beds," "dome-top beds," "square dome-top beds," "press-beds," and "field-beds." The press-



HEPPELWHITE BED, 1788

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bed is a folding-bed in the shape of a wardrobe, and the field-beds, " single-headed " and " double-headed," are nothing more nor less than the French *lit à tombeau.* " Sweeps for field-bed tops " received a great deal of attention from the firm of Heppelwhite. Urns form the finish to the bedposts. An ordinary American bedstead of the Eighteenth Century which survived into the succeeding one appears on Plate LXXV., and is of a type familiar to many of the present generation.

The bed that the Marquise de Pompadour had at Marly, draped in a lovely silk of blue and white stripes, upon which bouquets of flowers were also woven, anticipates the new style, for, as has been noted, the designers who were responsible for the coming Louis XVI. style were already at work in the days of Louis XV. Of all beds in the Louis XVI. period, the alcove, sofa and niche beds were the favorites. Ranson, Delafosse and Salembier made many drawings of beds, in all of which drapery was of the greatest importance. The beds called *à la polonaise, à la turque, à la chinoise, à tombeau, à double tombeau* and *à l'anglaise* were all varieties of the sofa, supplied with a decorative canopy, two bolsters and curtains. The canopy became smaller and smaller until the curtains were held by a ring or crown. The *lit à couronne,* as it was called, long remained popular; but the *lit à la dauphine,* which was light and graceful, and had a dome, enjoyed but short favor.

Beds were sumptuous in the reign of Louis XVI. and some of them were extraordinary in price. The King had one bed that cost, with its curtains, 82,000 livres, and Marie Antoinette had one that cost more than 130,000 livres.

A handsome specimen of this period appears on Plate LXXVI. The woodwork is carved and gilt and the tapestry consists of garlands and flowers in various colors on a white ground. The curtains are white silk.

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PLATE LXXX

Sixteenth Century Chairs

Flemish, covered with Leather,
Cluny Museum

French, Carved
Louvre

Swiss *Sgabello*
Metropolitan Museum

Italian Folding-Chair
Cluny Museum

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The "*lit anglais*," or "sofa-bed," was the most popular, and there were many varieties of it. In 1773, M. Carré, Rue d'Enfer, has for sale a yellow damask "*lit à l'anglaise*," which is also a sofa, being five feet wide and six feet long, the woodwork of walnut, carved and strengthened with iron. In 1785, a "cane bed, with three backs, that can serve as an ottoman in a summer drawing-room" is offered for sale.

In a long list of beds owned by rich Parisians, we read of a *lit à housse* of crimson velvet embroidered with gold, Maréchal Duc d'Estrées (1771); *lit à la polonaise*, of blue damask and *moiré*, Boucher the painter (1771); *lit à housse* of green damask, Madame Favart (1772); embroidered muslin bed, the Duc de Bouillon (1772); *lit de perse*, white background with cut-out figures, the Duchesse de Brissac (1773); Indian damask, Chevalier d'Hestin (1775); crimson velvet with gold braid, Duc de Saint-Aignan (1776); yellow satin embroidered with gold flowers, Marquise de Courcillon (1777); five beds of yellow damask (one costing 24,000 livres), in 1779; and crimson and white *moiré*, la Comtesse de Bérulle (1779). From 1780 to 1787 we hear of blue and white damask, crimson and white brocade, blue and white *moiré*, blue satin embroidered with gold, blue and white brocade, green damask, blue damask and many Oriental stuffs. The Marquis de Ménars had a beautiful bed of blue *moiré* embroidered in various subjects in 1787; the Duc d'Orléans a *lit à la duchesse* of silver velvet with flowers and fringe of gold, and in 1787 the financier Beaujon, had a dome-bed hung with Gobelin tapestry.

The niche with its draped sofa-bed still continued popular; but the form of the bed changed. The grooved legs and posts were visible between the folds of the damask or velvet curtains; the canopy was generally circular, gilt or painted in light gray, and carved with garlands of flowers, rows of

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beads and rosettes, and brightened with lines of gold. The mattresses were soft, and the pillows and bolsters were down.

As a rule, the headboard and footboard of beds were alike if the bed was *vu de face*, that is to say, placed sideways against the wall, and of unequal size if *vu de pied* (seen from the foot), or placed in the corner. It is from this period that the latter kind, *lit de coin*, dates.

The head and footboard were left plain or covered. Sometimes they were painted or lacquered or of gilded wood or of natural wood ornamented with bronze gilt *or moulu* decorations. The use of veined woods gradually did away with covering the head and footboards.

The column seldom appears. When it does, however, it is very light (occasionally of iron) and covered with the same material as the curtains. The beds are draped in muslin, Persian, silk, etc., and trimmed with bows of ribbon, festoons, etc., etc. The canopies or baldachins are much smaller than the beds. Folding beds are not uncommon. In 1781, a bed in the form of a *commode*, garnished with copper, is offered; and in 1785 a French newspaper advertises "a pretty bed enclosed in a secretary made of mahogany, *or moulu* adornments, seven feet high and three and a half feet wide. In 1783 the Marquis de Vigean has a *lit d'antichambre* enclosed in a secretary, and in 1784 Madame Le Gras a "bed of crimson damask enclosed in an *armoire en secrétaire.*"

Sofas are so closely allied to beds that it is difficult in the last days of Louis XVI. to tell the difference between them. The draped sofa is described variously as *lit de repos, chaise longue, duchesse, bergère, à la turque, à la polonaise, à la chinoise;* and we even find plates labelled "sofa-bed *à l'antique.*" The latter leads into the styles of the early Nineteenth Century.

The *Cabinet des Modes* from 1786 to 1790 gives examples

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PLATE LXXXI

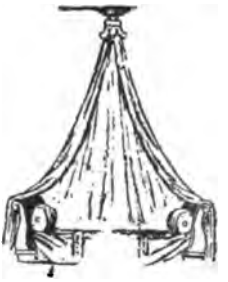
Seventeenth Century Italian Chairs and *Sgabello*

Palazzo Mansi, Lucca

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of furniture that merge into the style of the *Directoire*. A bed in the form of a pulpit, and another called bed *à la turque* appear in the volume for 1786; and among the plates in the volume for 1790 there is a *lit de la fédération*. At this period, when the boudoir had become a political cabinet, and the graceful pictures of Boucher and Fragonard had given place to coarse caricatures and prints and pictures for the destroyed Bastille, France reclined in antique armchairs and slept in "patriotic beds." The fasces of lances formed the bed-posts, and these were surmounted by the Liberty Cap. "She also slept," to quote from De Goncourt, "in the *lit de fédération* of four columns in the form of fasces, grooved and painted in greyish white, varnished, with the stems of the fasces gilded, as well as the axes and iron supports of the canopy." The bed used during the *Directoire* period was larger than the Louis XVI. bed, but, generally speaking, it was somewhat low and supplied with a couple of mattresses. In some, headboard and footboard were of equal height; in others, only the headboard appeared.



LIT À TULIPE, EMPIRE STYLE

During the Empire, the beds were of mahogany ornamented with bronze trimmings (see Plate LXXVII.), or the frames were painted and decorated in imitation of bronze. Some of the beds were square, some were rounded and some were shaped like a boat and some like a shell. Some of them had pilasters that supported vases, busts, or statuettes. The typical bed, however, which lasted long into the century and which has never gone out of fashion, had a headboard and footboard of equal height and heavy scrolled ends. This is still known as the "French bed." The proper way to place it in a room is to have one

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side against the wall. At each end should be placed a bolster that follows the outline of the scroll. During the Empire period, curtains were hung from a canopy in the shape of a crown, or thrown with studied carelessness over an arrow. Sometimes the heavy curtains were draped over thin curtains of gauze or muslin.

Sheraton's beds are most elaborate. They include French beds, dome-beds, canopy-beds, state beds, alcove-beds, sofa-beds and field-beds, all in the latest styles in vogue on both sides of the Channel.

At first he follows the beds that were popular in France in the days of Louis XVI., and makes many varieties of the high-post and sofa-bed. The "sofa-bed" is, of course, the *lit anglaise* so fashionable in France, with its two ends alike and its two bolsters. "The frames of these beds," writes Sheraton, "are sometimes painted in ornaments to suit the furniture. But when the furniture is of very rich silk, they are done in white and gold and the ornaments carved. The roses which tuck up the curtains are formed by silk cord, etc., on the wall to suit the hangings; and observe that the centre rose contains a brass hook and socket, which will unhook so that the curtains will come forward and entirely enclose the whole bed. The sofa part is sometimes made without any back, in the manner of a couch. It must also be observed that the best kind of these beds have what the upholsterers call a fluting, which is done by a slight frame of wood, fastened to the wall, on which is strained in straight puckers some of the same stuff of which the curtains are made."



BED BY SHERATON, 1803

The *lit à la duchesse* he calls "Duchess, a kind of bed composed of three parts, or a chair at each end and stool

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PLATE LXXXII

Seventeenth Century Chairs

Flemish Chair, covered with Leather, "Spanish Foot"

Carved Oak, or Wainscot Chair

Metropolitan Museum

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between them. They are only intended for a single lady, and are, therefore, not more than about 30 inches wide. The chair ends, when apart, have the appearance of large arm or *fauteuil* chairs and the middle part may be used as a stool. The tester is made to fold. The arms of the chair part are dolphins and an acanthus spray ending in a scroll ornaments the back. The duchess is covered with a striped material, a square or round cushion is at each end, and the drapery is composed of two curtains falling from a kind of dome (ornamented by a pineapple or *pomme*) while a scarf is slipped through rings and forms a swag in front of the dome and two festoons at each side."

In 1803, Sheraton notes that within the past few years cane has been introduced into the ends of mahogany beds " for the purpose of keeping in the bed clothes. Sometimes the bottom of beds are caned." He also mentions that bed steps are caned.

Sheraton preferred a firm bed to the ancient one of down, or feathers. He recommended a straw mattress, then a flock mattress, then a feather bed, and, last of all, a hair mattress.

England and France exchanged styles; for we read in an English fashion magazine of a novelty "lately imported from Paris, and represents one of those pieces of furniture which are consequent on the reciprocal exchanges of British and French taste: it is an English bed with corner posts decorated agreeably to Parisian fancy. The framework is made of rosewood ornamented with carved foliage, gilt in matt and burnished gold. The drapery is of rose-colored silk lined with azure blue and consists of one curtain, gathered up at the ring in the centre of the canopy being full enough to form the festoons and curtains both of the head and foot. The elegance of this bed greatly depends on the choice, arrangement and modification of the

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three primitive colors, blue, yellow and red; and in the combination of these, its chasteness or gaiety may be augmented or abridged." The curtain is edged with fringe.

The fashionable English designs of 1816 show that draperies were of more importance than the woodwork. One has curtains of pea-green, poppy red, and canary very gracefully arranged; and one, intended for a young lady of fashion, has hangings of light blue silk and a tender shade of brown, supported by rings and rods of brass, behind which the curtains were drawn up by cords and tassels.

In 1817, a canopy, or sofa-bed, has draperies of silk ornamented with gold lace and fringe; the linings were of lilac and buff. These curtains, which fell from a kind of crown, were dark green. A muslin embroidered drapery was used as a covering in the daytime.

In 1822, an English decorator remarks: "The taste for French furniture is carried to such an extent that most elegantly furnished mansions, particularly the sleeping-rooms, are fitted up in the French style; and we must confess, that, while the antique forms the basis of their decorative and ornamental furniture, it will deservedly continue in repute." He then gives a fine plate representing "a sofa, or French bed, designed and decorated in the French style" and "adapted for apartments of superior elegance." The sofa is highly ornamented with Grecian ornaments in burnished and matt gold. The cushions and inner coverlids are of white satin. The outer covering is of muslin in order to display the ornaments to advantage and bear out the richness of the canopy. The dome is composed of alternate pink and gold fluting, surrounded with ostrich feathers, forming a novel, light and elegant



SOFA-BED, EMPIRE STYLE

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PLATE LXXXIII

Seventeenth Century Chairs

Corner Chair with Rush Seat and "Spanish Feet" Carved Oak (1670)

"Low-leather" Chair Flemish Turned Chair

Metropolitan Museum

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effect; the drapery is green satin with a salmon-colored lining silk and lined with pink taffeta.

The shape of the sofa was what we should designate as Empire. The ornaments that the decorator speaks of were at one end a big horn of plenty filled with flowers and ending in a bird, the head of which lay upon the floor. The other end also terminated in a bird and curved upwards in the form of a scroll.

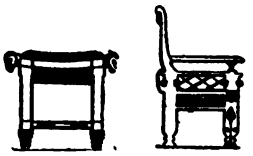
Though the French beds and sofa-beds were fashionable in the first quarter of the century, the high-post and field-bed had not gone out of favor. We hear of mahogany carved bedsteads, maple carved bedsteads and down beds with pillows (1822); a bureau bedstead (1823); four-post curled mahogany bedsteads (1823); carved and plain mahogany high-post bedsteads, curled maple do. with screws and improved joints (1823); a "superb mahogany high-post bedstead with elegant cornishes," cost $100 in 1824; mahogany and curled maple and field-bedsteads (1824); rosewood, mahogany, plain and curled maple bedsteads, with a variety of French patterns (1825); French bedsteads, mahogany and field-bedsteads (1825); French bedsteads with curtains (1825); rosewood, mahogany and French and curled maple bedsteads (1826); mahogany high-post and French bedsteads (1826); and maple high-post and field-bedsteads (1826).

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IV

SEATS

THE climatic conditions of the valley of the Euphrates were not so favorable for the preservation of objects fashioned out of wood as were the tombs of the Nile valley, and, therefore, we have only carvings on the monuments and some fragmentary metal-work as examples of Babylonian furniture. The chairs resemble those of Egypt in character, animals and captives entering into the decoration. The lion, bull, ram and horse frequently occur in whole, or part. Beautifully carved footstools also appear with feet of lions' paws and bulls' hoofs. The feet of the seats in the Assyrian sculptures at Khorsabad resemble inverted pine-cones.



ASSYRIAN SEATS

The couches were similarly ornamented and supplied like the chairs with luxurious cushions. A slab of the Seventh Century B. C., shows the king and queen taking a meal in their garden. The king lies on a couch, the head of which curves forward and serves as an arm-rest. The legs and rails are square and the feet conical. The decoration consists of human figures, lions, mouldings and scrolls. The queen sits on a high, straight-backed chair with curved arms. This shows where the Greeks derived the custom of the men reclining and women sitting at meals.

Netted or reed-bottomed chairs were comfortably upholstered with stuffed seats and backs and richly worked

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PLATE LXXXIV

Anglo-Dutch Crown-back Chair, Cabriole Legs and Hoof-feet

Leather Chair with "Spanish Feet"

Metropolitan Museum

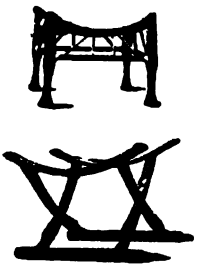
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cushions. The seats sometimes had square, flat, leather cushions with painted decorations. In the course of ages, most of the textile materials have perished; but the wall paintings, such as those at Thebes, show that the chair coverings had brilliant colors and artistic patterns.

Lower Egypt being poor in timber, cabinet woods were imported. Chairs of ebony and other rare woods inlaid with ivory were fit objects of tribute. Thus Ethiopia seems to have excelled in their manufacture, for they appear in the tributes brought to Rameses II. by his black subjects.

The seats found in the Egyptian tombs which were placed there with other domestic furniture and utensils for the use of the mummy in the other world show that the native cabinet-maker produced work of great excellence both in taste and execution. The tombs, however, are the abodes of kings and priests and great officers of the land, and the chair was the seat of dignity. The paintings on the walls show that the ordinary person sat on the floor. In representations of interiors, such as the house of Ey, armchairs appear only in the dining-room. Even at social entertainments, we see ladies sitting on thick rugs or mats with which the floors are covered at all periods.



EBONY SEAT INLAID WITH IVORY, AND FOLDING-STOOL, EGYPTIAN.

The oldest form of seat, found in tombs of the Fourth Dynasty, is a carved, wooden chair with legs shaped like those of a lion, and provided with a cushion. It was sometimes intended for two people, and is found as late as the New Empire. Under the Middle Empire it was made more comfortable by sloping the back and lowering the seat. It was usually high enough to need a footstool.

The chairs of the kings were often very high, the arms

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were carved in the forms of animals such as running lions, and the lower supports were figures of bound captives. Very few of these have been found in the tombs; M. Maspero did not know of one, but a specimen, owned by J. Howarth, Esq., is now in the British Museum. It is a splendid specimen of a royal seat, as the cartouche shows that it belonged to Queen Hatshepsut, of the Eighteenth Dynasty. It is apparently made of rosewood, the carved legs resembling those of bulls, with silver hoofs and a solid gold cobra twined around each leg. The arms of the chair are of lighter wood, having cobras carved on the flat in low relief. The markings of the serpents are represented by hundreds of tiny silver annulets.

There are several beautiful chairs of the Eleventh Dynasty in the Louvre and the British Museum. One that has preserved the original brilliance of its color has its back ornamented with two lotus flowers and with a row of lozenges inlaid in ivory and ebony upon a red ground.

Camp-stools were common; the legs were sometimes carved like the neck and head of a bird.

The height of the chairs varied considerably. Some had seats on the level of the knee, and some were much lower. In form, the most curious one resembled the "kangaroo chair" of the early Victorian era. It made the sitter assume a posture with his knees approaching his chin.

The Greeks had several kinds of chairs. The *thronos* was the seat of the god in the temple, and the seat of honor in the house, where it was reserved for the master and his guests. It was a large chair with low arms and a straight back of varying height. The home *thronos* was made of wood; those in the temples and public buildings were of marble, richly carved with figures and garlands. It was accompanied by a footstool, either separate or attached to the front legs. The seats were supplied with rugs, skins and cushions.

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PLATE LXXXV

Anglo-Dutch Chairs and Double Chair or Settee

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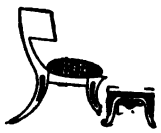
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Seats

The *diphros* was a low stool without a back. It had four legs, either upright or crossed. The cross-legged *diphros* had a webbed seat, and could be folded. The legs often were carved and gracefully curved. A separate cushion was sometimes added for greater comfort.

The *klismos* was a chair of quite modern type. The four legs had a graceful curve; the back inclined comfortably and ended in a semi-circular bar that fitted the line of the shoulders.

The *diphros* with upright legs was lengthened to form a couch (*kline*), which at first had no head or footboard. Afterwards, in addition to these, a back was added to one of the long sides, and a sofa was produced, the form of which was familiar in every home two generations ago. This *kline* was made of maple, box and other woods, plain and veneered. The legs were carved or turned, and the framework was often inlaid with gold, silver or ivory.



ROMAN CHAIR AND STOOL

The Romans had several forms of chairs. Most important was the *sella curulis* which dates from the days of the kings. It was a folding-stool with curved cross-legs. Originally, it was made of ivory and later of metal. It was used as a judgment seat.

" The simple folding-stool with crossed legs, the backless chair with four perpendicular legs, the chair with a high or low back, and the state throne were all made after Greek patterns. The word *sella* is the generic term for the different classes of chairs comprised in the Greek *diphroi* and *klismoi;* only the chair with a back to it is distinguished as *cathedra.* The form of the *cathedra* resembles that of our ordinary drawing-room chairs but for the wider, frequently semi-circular curve of the back, which greatly adds to the comfort of the seated person. Soft cushions, placed

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both against the back and on the seat, mark the *cathedra* as a piece of furniture belonging essentially to the women's apartments; the more effeminate men of a later period, however, used these *fauteuils* in preference. The legs of the chairs were frequently shaped in some graceful fashion, and adorned with valuable ornaments of metal and ivory; tasteful turnery was also often applied to them. Different from these chairs is the *solium*, the dignified form of which designates it as the seat of honor for the master of the house, or as the throne of rulers of the state and gods; it answers, therefore, to the *thronos* of the Greeks. The richly decorated back rises perpendicularly sometimes up to the height of the shoulders, at others above the head of the seated person; two elbows, mostly of massive workmanship, are attached to the back." [1]

As an article of decorative furniture, the chair was scarce in Europe throughout the Middle Ages and during the early Renaissance. It was a seat of dignity and honor, the distinctive sign of authority and lordship, and was reserved for the aged, the master of the house and important personages. Its place was between the bed and the chimney, fixed with its back to the wall. Its decoration was in keeping with the rest of the carved wood-work of the room. This chair, of which many examples exist in public and private collections, had a tall, straight back surmounted by a daïs and the arms. The seat was a box or chest with a lid. It was raised rather high above the floor and had a step in front of it. This is sometimes called the *prie-dieu* chair, probably because devotional books were kept in the seat. The ordinary seats, however, consisted of chests and benches; and the chair proper is not common till the Fourteenth Century.

In Germany in the Thirteenth Century, sexagonal and

[1] E. Guhl.

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PLATE LXXXVI

Windsor Chairs
Anglo-Dutch Chairs
American "Colonial" Three-bar, or Banister Back, with Rush Seat
Metropolitan Museum

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octagonal seats, with a leg at each angle, were common. The requirement that the seat of justice should have four legs dates from this period. The Gothic chairs are often quite light and graceful, but most of them are of plain form and ornamented with very shallow carving. In this century also originated chairs with light iron frames; the seat was a cushion on webbing. During the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries the carving of the high chairs was highly developed.



CARVED WOOD CHAIR, SCANDINAVIAN, TWELFTH TO THIRTEENTH CENTURY

In Germany as elsewhere during the Middle Ages, the chair was reserved for the lord or distinguished guest, while the rest of the household sat on benches, faldstools, camp-stools, settles and chests. Splendid chairs were ornamented with gold, silver and ivory and inlaid woods, and covered with fine woven stuffs and cushions. The legs were sometimes bowed, massive and strong, and sometimes straight and slender. They were often turned. The backs were higher than the arms, which often consisted of two posts joined with leather or other material. After the Tenth Century, the legs and posts of the arms and back were often turned. The back was then often no higher than the arms, and the posts had their ends carved to represent heads of lions and other animals. If the seat was in the form of a chest, it was often broad enough to accommodate several persons. The fronts and high backs of these benches or settees were filled with bar and lattice-work, and the feet were carved like those of animals. About 1100 A. D., stools with high backs came into general use; and about a century later, we find them with woven material filling the space between the back posts.

The oldest piece of furniture is in Germany, in Salzburg.

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This is a folding-chair of wood, painted red, with heads and feet of lions of ivory decorating the side supports and bas-reliefs of ivory also forming a decoration. The seat is covered with stamped leather. It was said to have been given by Eberhard II., Archbishop of Salzburg, to the Abbess Gertrude II. (1238–1252).

The illuminated manuscripts show that chests were largely used as seats during the early Middle Ages. Of the rare pieces of furniture of earlier date than 1300, the majority belong to the service of the church, and when the big carved chairs came into general use, their decoration was similar to that of the Gothic choir-stalls. The chairs of the Fourteenth Century had carved human and animal figures, Gothic tracery, flower and leaf work and bas-reliefs of scenes of Biblical history. At this time, also, a new decoration for panels was introduced which reached its highest development during the Fifteenth Century. It was used universally on the panels of walls and furniture. This is known as the linenfold, and is supposed to have originally been meant to represent folded parchment.

Sauval, the historian of ancient Paris, says that in the Louvre at that date there were no low chairs, nor folding seats, nor stools, that convenient kind of furniture not yet having been invented. In the king's chamber and in the queen's, there were only trestles, benches, forms and *fauteuils;* and to make these more superb, the wood-carvers loaded them with a confusion of bas-reliefs and other ornaments; the carpenters surrounded them with panels and the painters painted them red.

About this time, however, a light, X-shaped, folding chair must have been coming into use. It appears in scenes of social life in the illuminated manuscripts.

An example of Italian workmanship of the Sixteenth Century is given on Plate LXXX.

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PLATE LXXXVII

Seventeenth Century *Lit de Repos*
Early Eighteenth Century Folding-Chair
Metropolitan Museum

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Oak and cedar were the woods most generally employed in making these chairs which were often gilded as well as carved and decorated with painting by the best artists. Towards the middle of the Sixteenth Century, the form of this chair was modified. The new model was lighter and broader in the seat. Color was abolished, and the carving was sometimes accompanied by marquetry and inlaid marble.



ENGLISH CHAIR, FIFTEENTH CENTURY

There were several kinds of low chairs. The principal ones mentioned in French inventories are the chair with arms, chair without arms, table-chair, three-legged chair, chair with back for sitting beside the fire; woman's chair, child's little easy chair and *vertugadin* chair. The *tour*, or revolving, chair is frequently met with also.

In addition to the stiff and splendid seats of ceremony, there were more modest seats for the use of women and youth in ordinary life. The *tabouret* was a little low seat covered with velvet or some carpet stuff of bright color and varied pattern which was used by women as they sat and chatted together and did their needlework. It was also called a *placet*. Cotgrave defines the *tabouret* as "a cushion stool, or a little, low stool," and the *placet* as "a low stool."

In England, as on the Continent, coffers and benches formed the usual seats before the Tudor period. The Renaissance was slow in crossing the Channel, notwithstanding the encouragement given to foreign artists and workmen by Henry VII. As abroad, however, the tendency of the seats was towards lightness. The great panelled chairs gave way to smaller ones with turned legs, called "thrown" chairs, for use in bedrooms. About 1530, the curule-shaped chair became popular. The seat was of leather and leather bands joined the back posts.

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The high-backed bench (see Plate III.) was merely the chair enlarged to accommodate several persons at once. It had a high, panelled back usually surmounted by a daïs, a coffer seat, arms and a step. This high bench began to disappear together with the high and massive carved chair at the Renaissance, giving place to folding-seats and chairs with low backs.

The daïs of the Middle Ages called *canapeum* had disappeared from the bench before the close of the Valois period, but the name was continued. The *canapé* became one of the most important seats under Louis XIV. and his successors. It came into fashion about 1689 according to Furetière, who wrote: "*Canapé*, a kind of chair with a very wide back, capable of seating two persons. This word is new in the language, and some people call it *sopha*."

Of the French chairs of the Sixteenth Century, De Champeaux writes: "The imitation of the Italian masters who had returned to the ancient traditions, forgotten for many centuries, troubled the production of the French school for a short time; but, in a few years, the French workmen had assimilated these new models, and the art of the cabinet-maker shone in France with a splendor that it had not known in Italy. The chairs of the reigns of Charles VIII. and Louis XII. (1483–1515) unite the evident characters of the two currents running in opposite directions and ending by mingling. Some of these chairs show the national style in a very pronounced manner, while others are very sensibly influenced by foreign principles. The latter belong to a school sure of itself, that knows antiquity but does not slavishly follow it. Several French provinces attained great celebrity in this art, and produced chairs the harmonious proportions and delicate carving of which can not be too highly admired. Burgundy and the Lyonnais, so skilful in the art of wood-carving, produced

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very remarkable examples; but they were surpassed by Auvergne, which seems to have made a specialty of high-backed chairs, enriched with arabesques and medallions, treated with a supple and vigorous chisel."

The *escabeau* was a stool for sitting at the table only, and always accompanies the table in the inventories. It differed from the *tabouret,* which had four legs, by having board supports at each end; the surfaces of these were usually ornamented with carving. It was probably the same as the English buffet stool. Another seat of a commoner kind was the *selle,* which Cotgrave described as "any ill-favored ordinary or country stool of a cheaper sort than the joined or buffet-stool." There was also the *sellette,* which was a very low stool.



FIFTEENTH CENTURY CHAIR

During the Renaissance, chairs were not used by womankind to the extent that they are to-day. Cushions placed on the floor were extensively used as seats by young women especially. The *carreau,* or *quarreau,* lasted as a seat till the Louis Quatorze period. In 1606, Nicot describes it as "a pillow of tapestry or other stuff, filled with wool, cotton, hair or straw, on which people kneel in church, and women sit at home, busy with the needle as they gossip." The *porte-carreau* was a little piece of furniture with bulb feet, on which pillows were piled. Molière owned one "of varnished wood in the Chinese style."

In Italy upholstered chairs came into vogue as early as the Fifteenth Century. Velvet was the favorite material, and neither the style of upholstery nor form of the chair changed until the Seventeenth Century. These luxurious chairs were seats of state and not in general use. They often appear in portraits. For instance, Pope Sixtus IV., by Melozzo da Forli, sits in one, as does Pope Leo X., by Raphael.

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Furniture

In the Treasury of Saint Mark's in Venice there is a carved walnut chair, with a high back, which is said to have been used as the Doge's throne from the time it was made, — at the beginning of the Sixteenth Century. It is of beautiful proportions and beautifully carved. The decoration is much like the marriage-coffers of the period and also the *armoires*.

The chairs at the beginning of the Sixteenth Century were painted, as they were in the Middle Ages, to match the rest of the furniture. The high-backed chair was the same in France as in Italy. The low-backed chair was square, or in the form of a trapeze, either with or without arms, and with a narrow or straight back.

During the greater part of the Sixteenth Century the favorite seat was what is known as the Spanish Chair. It is a square chair with high back, carved arms, turned legs and connecting rails, the front bar being broad and variously carved and decorated. The back posts and arms usually terminate in heads of lions or other animals. The seat and back were frequently covered with some rich woven and embroidered stuff, fixed to the frame with large-headed nails. The more correct material, however, was stamped Spanish leather.

The *faudesteuil* swarms in the inventories of the rich in the Seventeenth Century. Being upholstered with leather or woven stuff, it was not carved except on the arms, the framework being decorated with painting and gilding, and in Italy and Spain with marquetry.

The Spaniards of the Renaissance made considerable use of the Italian *tarsia* methods of decoration, but still more of marquetry, produced by mauresque artists. Spanish cathedrals and churches still possess numerous folding-chairs of this period. The ornamentation consists of delicate geometrical patterns of inlaid wood, bone, white or stained

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PLATE LXXXVIII

Regency Arm-Chair, Covered with Tapestry and *Chaise Confessionale*

Metropolitan Museum

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ivory, and tin. Similar chairs were made in Venice in imitation of the work imported from Egypt and Syria.

As is the case in other countries, we have to turn to the choir-stalls of the Spanish Cathedrals for the beginning of the modern chair. It is supposed from the Germanic style of the figures and ornamentation that the earliest wood-carvers that worked in Spain were from the Low Countries; but about the beginning of the Sixteenth Century the carvers seem to have been entirely Spanish. On Plate LXXVIII. Italian choir-stalls of the Sixteenth Century are represented.

Large arm-chairs, four square in form, with the seat, back and arms covered with leather or embroidered stuffs, were used. Low stools were also common.

Although the Spaniards, during the Renaissance, frequently used *tarsia* like the Italians in colored woods, in a great number of cases their marquetry work resembled rather the style of the Moorish artists. A great many X-shaped chairs, still in existence, are covered with delicate geometrical designs of wood, white or tinted ivory, and even metal. Some are in the Cathedral of Toledo.

The fald-stool came into vogue in the middle of the Sixteenth Century. Cotgrave (1611) defined it as "a low, large and easy folding chair, having both a back and elbows." In France it was known as the *faudesteuil,* and was also called *chaise brisée, ployante, à tenailles,* and *à molette.* In Italy, it was called *a forbici;* and, in Spain, *de tijera,* or *scissors,* on account of its X-shape. (See Plate LXXX.)

In French inventories it appears often and in considerable variety under the Valois. In 1556, we read of ten *chaises à tenailles* for seats for the princesses at the table; in 1572 a chair of walnut wood folding with hinges, and high back, back and seat covered with black velvet, the nails gilt; and in 1589, the *Isle des Hermaphrodites* says that the "King

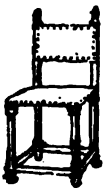
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and his two followers sat at the table in velvet chairs made in the style called *brisées*. The rest of the troupe had chairs which opened and shut like waffle-irons."

Lyons was famed for the *caqueteuses* or *caquetoires* made there. Cotgrave defines the word as the "seat whereon women used to sit at a meeting where they prattle together."

Trevoux describes it as a "low chair with a very high back, and without arms, on which people gossip at their ease beside the fire." It came in about the middle of the Sixteenth Century.

One authority says that the *chaise caquetoire*, or *chaise perroquet*, described all chairs of this age with open backs, whether composed of two, three, four or five horizontal rails or carved or turned backs.



FLEMISH LOW LEATHER CHAIR, CHAISE CAQUETOIRE, SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

Whether the word *perroquet* was taken from the old French mast or whether it was called parrot chair on account of it serving for gossip (*caquetoire*) is a subject for conjecture. At any rate *perroquet* is used for the folding-chair. Saint Simon says: "Monseigneur himself, and all who were at the table had seats with backs of black leather which could be folded up for carriage use and which were called *perroquets*." In 1690, we read that "folding chairs which are supported by bands or strong canvas, to make them more flexible, are called folding chairs; and when they have a back, they are called *perroquets* and they are used at the table."

A good description of this kind of chair is given in Catherine de' Medici's inventory. The famous Queen had "two little *chaises caquetoires* covered with tapestry and trimmed with fringe of green silk and fringe of gold threads, tufted."

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PLATE LXXXIX

Louis XV. *Bergère*

Louis XV. Gondola Chairs with Cane Seats and Backs

Metropolitan Museum

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Cardinal Mazarin had in 1661 twelve *chaises à perroquet*, the frames of walnut wood and covered with red crimson velvet trimmed with silk of the same shade.

The *chaise voyeuse* seems to have been introduced in this reign. The side supports were continuations of the back legs, and the top rail was covered with a cushion. The back of the chair was shaped like a violin, and on the seat, which was very high, the gentleman sat astride, resting his arms on the top rail, as he observed the card-table, play, or the company. The *voyeuse* reappeared with up-to-date alterations in the days of Louis XVI. (See Plate XCI.)

There were several varieties of the chair with a low back. It was made with and without arms, with solid and with open back; sometimes it was upholstered, and sometimes plain; the back was sometimes straight and sometimes slanting; and the seat was sometimes square, and sometimes broader in front than at the back. These chairs that were relatively light and comfortable in comparison with those of the preceding period, are numerously represented in the great collections.

The typical Flemish arm-chair of the early Seventeenth Century is shown on Plate LXXX. The uprights are turned, the double rails grooved, and the back posts terminate in carved lions' heads. It is upholstered with leather; the nails have large brass heads.

Contemporary with this is the French chair (Plate LXXX.), which is similar in form and general construction. It shows, however, the change from heaviness and solidity towards grace and lightness.

Two Flemish arm-chairs in the Louvre are represented on Plate LXXIX. The one with the drawer under the seat is attributed to the end of the Sixteenth Century. The other, with caned back and seat, is a remarkably fine model of the chair that was so popular in England and the Low

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Countries from 1660 to 1700. The modern name for it is the " Charles the Second Chair."

" The Flemish chair was imported in 1690, was weak in construction — and is generally to be met with in a ' sprung ' condition as to its back — at the plane of the seat; the badly chosen woods in which it was all too often executed, have perished at the hand of Time, aided by the ' worm.' In character, it was ambitious, but painfully hybrid. Let us examine one. Portuguese scroll-turned pillars at back; legs and possibly stretchers of the same feeling; Spanish feet; brace of under-frame and back splat Flemish, with Louis Quatorze under-framing, the whole upholstered in some brilliant Flemish wool-work. Replicas of this chair were produced in England by the imported Flemish artisan, but a change came over the scene when our workmen began to assert themselves. Portuguese turning below the seat and the Spanish foot disappeared, together with the Flemish brace, in favor of well-ordered turning, built up more on the lines in vogue in France. Native wool-work took the place of foreign, and construction received more attention. Experts differ in fixing the absolute time at which the transition took place, but the more chaste the leg and stretcher, the better the building and the more homely the upholstering scheme, so much the more likely that we have before us an example of English handiwork." [1]

Marot kept to the term-shaped legs and flat, curved stretchers. His chairs are large and heavy, and usually have enormously high backs especially adapted for showing off the beautiful materials that he also designed. Sometimes the bases were decorated with swags of drapery or scallops, edged with braid or fringe. He often used the acorn or the flattened bulb for feet.

Mahogany was now coming into favor as a cabinet wood;

[1] O. G. Wheeler.

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PLATE XC

Louis XV. *Bergère*, Cane Chairs, Upholstered Chairs and Arm-Chair

Metropolitan Museum

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and chair frames were made of it as well as of walnut. The new Anglo-Dutch styles presented the following characteristics: The leg was cabriole, ending in a hoof foot, and later in the ball-and-claw. Sometimes the legs were connected with stretchers, but as time progressed these were discarded altogether. The solid curved splat was jar or vase shaped, and there was little carving except on the spring of the knee. There was a tendency towards greater lightness. (See Plate LXXXIV.) Two chairs placed together formed the double chair or settee. (See Plate LXXXV.)

The two-chair back, or three-chair back, became popular in the reign of Queen Anne. This form does not consist solely in placing two or three chairs together, and adding arms, but is subject to certain laws of proportion of its own. The back of the chairs in the settee is always wider than that of the arm-chair. These two-chair back, three-chair back, and even four-chair back settees, appear in all styles, from the early jar-shaped splat and cabriole leg, through those that were pierced and carved in the Gothic, Chinese or Louis XV. style. Ladder-backs also occur in this form and shield-backs in the Heppelwhite period.

In the reign of Queen Anne, the Windsor chair came into use, and remained in popularity for about a hundred and fifty years. It was made of the cheaper kinds of wood. (See Plate LXXXVI.)

In inventories of the early Eighteenth Century the "crown-back chair" is often mentioned. It appears so often in Hogarth's pictures that it is now generally referred to as a "Hogarth chair." (See Plate LXXXIV.) From this the famous Chippendale chair was developed.

Molière's inventory (1673) mentions "six chairs of varnished and gilded wood with their cushions of taffeta striped with satin (35 *livres*); two arm-chairs of gilded wood cov-

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ered with green satin (40 *livres*); and six arm-chairs with sphinx figures completely gilded and provided with cushions for the seat and back of flowered satin with a violet ground, finished off with green and gold silk fringe (200 *livres*)."

The *lit de repos*, or *chaise longue* (see Plate LXXXVII.), originated in the days of Louis XIV. It generally had a headboard, and, in some cases, a head and footboard, or a back. The seat was cane and the headboard was carved. Cushions added comfort. Sometimes the *lit de repos* was referred to as a *canapé*.

The legs and feet of the chairs in this reign are usually cut in a tapering form, with four sides, and ornamented with marquetry, paint, or gilding. The straining-rail is usually present and crosses the four legs, diagonally forming a sort of X. (See Plate XXV.) At the point of intersection a little ornament is placed. Some chairs have a carved front rail; others are finished with braid or fringe. The arms frequently end in the scrolled acanthus. Some of them have a cushion (*manchette*) on the arm.

The arm-chair (*fauteuil*) was very general in ordinary homes. The back was more or less inclined, the arms more or less curved, and the seat was of cane, or covered with tapestry or velvet. The carved frame shows volutes, foliage, and figures of children.

The *canapé* and *fauteuil* were reserved for those of highest rank. Prints of the end of the century show ladies sitting on them at court concerts. The *canapé* was evidently a novelty of the end of the century.

The *canapé* of this period had a wide seat with a high sloping back, stuffed seat and back, carved arms and baluster legs. It was upholstered with velvet or tapestry of floral and arabesque designs.

Towards the close of the reign of Louis XIV. a new arm-chair appears which exhibits the dawn of the coming

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PLATE XCI

Louis XVI. Chairs: Medallion Back, Covered with Tapestry; Lyre-back *Voyeuse;* and Lyre-back Chair

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style of Louis XV. The slightly curved back is arched, and the feet terminate in a carved leaf, or "leaf-shoe." Other typical chairs are shown on Plate LXXXVIII. The one on the right is the "*Confessionale.*"

The chairs of the Louis XV. period are charming. The frames show beautiful play of line and sweeping curves, and the arm of the *fauteuil* is strong and finely placed. The little elbow cushion, called *manchette,* gives an additional finish, and is also agreeable for the occupant. The frames were not only carved and gilt but painted or lacquered. In painting one color was generally used, brightened by threads of gold or white; but again several colors were used, and even the painting known as *camaïeux*. In less expensive homes, however, natural woods, particularly beech and oak, were more common than painted frames. In a drawing-room suite smaller arm-chairs, called *cabriolets,* were now introduced, and these were more arched and curved than the large ones. In the drawing-room and boudoir, it was customary to place a small arm-chair by the side of, or directly in front of, the big arm-chair, and the *cabriolet* had to be like the big one in form and upholstery. The materials were tapestry, representing Æsop's Fables or a Watteau picture, rich velvet or damask, with floral patterns and silk brocaded in colored flowers. "Persian," a kind of chintz, with bright designs on a white background, was frequently used for the boudoir and bedrooms. The material was tacked to the frames by means of gilt-headed or silver-headed nails placed so closely that they touched one another; and occasionally a braid or lace was used to hide the nails. A favorite pattern was called the "rat-tooth."

The *causeuse* is also an arm-chair of very comfortable appearance. In the Louis XV. period the angular form of the frame gave way to graceful curves. The wood-work was gilded and carved in flower and shell-work. The back

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and seat were then covered with Beauvais tapestry, decorated with flowers and mythological subjects and country scenes after designs by François Boucher and his school.

The arm-chair, or *fauteuil*, with upholstered instead of open sides, makes its appearance in the set of drawing-room furniture. It was called *chaise bergère*. This chair was sometimes called *marquise*, and was frequently accompanied by the *tabouret*, which, placed immediately in front of the chair, made it a kind of *chaise longue*. The seat was not very high from the floor, and was wider than it was deep. The *bergère* became fashionable, and appears in the designs of Chippendale, Ince and Mayhew and Heppelwhite, in whose books its name is often printed as "*barjair*." (See Plates LXXXIX. and XC.)

The *fauteuils* have a wavy top rail, and curving arms with cushions (*manchettes*) on the elbows. Two of the period are described as having richly carved and silvered frames, the seats and backs upholstered with jonquil-colored brocade embossed with silver flowers. The *fauteuil en confessional* is another name for the *bergère*.

The gondola arm-chair (see Plate LXXXIX.) usually had a back and seat of cane, and the elbows were covered with a cushion upholstered in leather. One leg was placed under each arm and one exactly in front and a fourth in the back. A leather cushion was often added.

A *fauteuil de commodité* was also introduced, which had a little mahogany desk attached to the right of the chair by means of a gilded steel support; and on either side of the chair were two sconce-arms for candles. The chair and its comfortable cushion were often covered with blue leather.

Dining-room chairs followed the form of the drawing-room chairs, and were covered with leather, tapestry and "Persian," already described on the foregoing page. Leather was very popular for covering seats; and yellow

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PLATE XCII

Louis XV. *Canapé* covered with Beauvais Tapestry, and Louis XV. Arm-Chair

Metropolitan Museum

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and blue, as well as red leather, were greatly in evidence; but brocade and tapestry were the favorite materials for the drawing-room. The coverings of seats and backs were put on with braid of gold, silver, or a color to match the textile, nailed with gilt-headed or silver-headed nails placed close together.

The first little gondola sofas, with two low seats and rounded form, that appeared in the reign of Louis XV. and were popular in that of his successor, were called *ottomans*. They were usually to be seen in the boudoirs, richly carved and upholstered with flowered silk. Bimont mentions them in his *Manual du Tapissier* in 1756.

The *canapé confident* was a sofa consisting of from two to four seats, and at each end, by the arms, another seat at the corner was rounded off, and then there was another arm or elbow at the other side. It was very popular.

The *chaise longue* was now sometimes composed of two sections; the principal one looked like a large *fauteuil* and the smaller one a kind of *tabouret*. The seats of each were placed so as to touch each other, the backs facing one another. The favorite seating was cane, and handsome cushions were added at pleasure.



GERMAN CHAIR-BACK, 1750

Those with gondola backs were called "*duchesse*."

The old form, called *banquette*, had not gone out of fashion. This name occurs as early as 1732; and as late as 1770 the King owned "nine *banquettes* covered with crimson plush, six feet long and seventeen inches wide, to be used at the *grand couvert*," and "four *banquettes*, each having two elbows, covered with blue velvet, trimmed with gold braid nailed on with gilt nails, the wood painted blue, picked out with gold."

In 1736 we hear of "two *banquettes* of beech-wood,

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delicately carved and varnished, 24 inches long, 14 inches deep, and 15 inches high, with seats of cane, each supplied with a hair cushion, covered on both sides with crimson damask, tufted."

At the end of the Louis XV. period many of the chairs and settees show transitional features in the legs, framework and character of the ornamentation. The curves become more restrained, the straight line becomes more insistent, and the tapering grooved leg supplants the sweeping cabriole. In the silk covering, too, the stripe begins to take the place of the floral brocades and damasks; and garlands, shepherds' crooks, shepherdesses' hats, knots of ribbon and pastoral attributes appear in the tapestries that cover the seats.

During the transitional period between Louis XV. and Louis XVI. the backs of the chairs assume the medallion shape. The leaf-shoe is also removed from the foot by degrees, and the feet are of a console shape, ending in a scroll or a shell or a peg-top. The curves entirely disappear. The next change in the back of the chair frame is that of a sort of projecting square, then comes the shape of the handle of a basket, and finally a perfect square between two straight columns, each of which is terminated by a steeple ornament. The handsomest chairs are richly carved, though low relief is preferred. The ornament in the centre of the top rail is a bow of ribbon, or a bouquet, or garland, of flowers, or leaves. The frames are made of mahogany or walnut, but more popular is a plain wood carved and gilded, or painted, to suit the taste of the individual. Some mahogany and rosewood arm-chairs are brightened by gilded bronze ornaments. Many arm-chairs have removable cushions that fit into the frame of the chair.



FAUTEUIL DE BUREAU, BY LALONDE

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PLATE XCIII

Eighteenth Century Ladder-back Chairs

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Occasionally the cushions are tufted. Cushions are also round, half round, or much flattened. Small arm-chairs are still called *cabriolets*. The tapestries of the Gobelins, Beauvais and Aubusson manufactories were in high estimation as coverings for seats and subjects from Boucher, Fragonard and other artists of the period were reproduced on light backgrounds. Shepherds, shepherdesses, children at play, garlands, baskets and vases of flowers, knots of ribbon, Cupids, quivers hidden among blossoms, birds and bird-cages, and many pastoral subjects and trophies were used alike in tapestries and in the figured and embroidered satins that supplanted the old figured damask. Then the stripe became the rage, although it had enjoyed a slight vogue in the days of Louis XV., when it was particularly favored by Madame de Pompadour and also Madame Du Barry. Winding ribbons, alternating with straight stripes, spangled with flowers, was a design called *Dauphine*, introduced at the time of Marie Antoinette's marriage with the Dauphin in 1770. Another favorite device was the feather which was also combined with the stripe. In every design the stripe appeared. At first it was hidden under branches and flowers and ribbons and feathers; but at length it triumphed over all other ornaments. All other designs were ignored and the stripe reigned alone. In 1788 Mercier wrote: "Everybody in the King's cabinet looks like a zebra."

The stripe appeared, of course, on all the velvets, silks, satins and chintzes used for furniture covering. Braids were popular and tassels and ball-fringe much used.

Chairs that were not stuffed in the back were often cut in the form of a lyre. Draped arm-chairs were called *fauteuils à la polonaise, à la turque, à la chinoise*, and probably matched the beds and sofas of the same name. Other arm-chairs had great wings that extended around the sides, making the chair almost square in form. The *fauteuil*

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bergère, with straighter lines than of yore, and a more aggressive arm, still holds its place in the drawing-room, and is sometimes also called *fauteuil confessional*. It was often supplied with an additional cushion for the seat. At this time cushions of both seat and back were frequently stuffed with hair instead of feathers or down, and were sometimes also tufted.

A peculiar chair, resembling the *voyeuse* (see Plate XCI.), now appeared. It was called the *voyelle*.



VOYELLE, FROM FONTAINEBLEAU

The back was a lyre reaching from the seat to the top rail. The latter was stuffed. Men sat astride of the seat, resting their arms on the rail, looking over the back of the chair. The *voyelle* was a sort of lounging chair and had the advantage of showing off the immensely long coat-tails affected by the "Incroyables."

In the French dining-room the frames of the chairs were of oak or mahogany, with turned bars or carved splats. Sometimes the frames were painted. The removable cushions were covered with velvet or leather, or perhaps they had cane or rush seats.

Arm-chairs for the library desks were of mahogany or painted wood, of gondola form, and, as the back, and seats were frequently of cane, were rendered more comfortable with extra cushions.

The sofa, or *canapé*, followed the style of the chairs; they were of the gondola, medallion, or basket form, and a little lower and deeper than those of the Louis XV. period. Sometimes they had high wings at each end, which gave them a cosy appearance, and sometimes they had an open space under each arm. The frames were, like the chairs, of carved and gilded wood, or painted and gilt

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PLATE XCIV
Chippendale Chairs

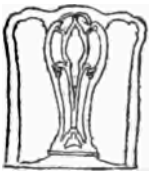
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and covered with tapestry, or with silk, or satin, or damask. The small, low and rounded sofa was called *ottomane,* and a certain kind of large sofa was called *ottomane à la reine.* With this, a square or round bolster was used. To this period belong many varieties of the draped sofa. We find *lit de repos, chaise longue, duchesse, bergère, à la turque, à la polonaise, à la chinoise,* and others, with and without canopies, so that the sofa merges into the bed, and the bed into the sofa. We also find plates labelled *sofa bed à l'antique,* a model very like the scroll-end sofas of the early Nineteenth Century.

The *duchesse* is still a combination of arm-chair and stool; and is often made in three instead of two divisions.

The *duchesse,* the *ottomane en gondole,* and several varieties of the sofa-bed, appear in the boudoirs of the period. The sofa with three backs or *sofa pommier,* which became of such importance during the *Directoire* and Empire, now makes its advent.

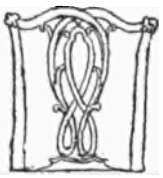


CHIPPENDALE CHAIR-BACK, 1754

Chippendale made Gothic chairs, French chairs, Chinese chairs, ribbon-back chairs, and chairs for the hall and the garden. He particularly excelled as an artist in his use of the ribbon, tying and twisting it in a very charming manner. The majority of the "Chippendale chairs" met with to-day have straight, square legs or cabriole ball-and-claw; but his designs show many varieties, among which are the cabriole, ending in a kind of scroll, resting on a leaf; the straight leg carved with husks; the leg composed of reeds wrapped with ribbon (anticipating the Louis XVI. Style, probably taken from some up-to-date French designer), leg ending in a hoof with ram's head on spring of cabriole knee, lion's claw on a flattened ball, and leg on which a dragon is climbing.

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Ribbon-back chairs are, perhaps, Chippendale's favorite. He says of them: "The length of the front leg is 19 inches; the rail of the seat (upholstered with small nails touching one another), is 22¾ inches; the seat is 18 inches square; and the back, from seat to top rail, 2 or 23 inches high." Chippendale adds: "If these seats are covered with red morocco, they will have a fine effect."

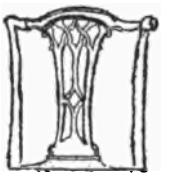


CHIPPENDALE CHAIR-BACK, 1754

A handsome ribbon-back chair appears on Plate XCV. Entwined ribbons and reversed scrolls form the splat; and in the centre of the top rail there is a large quatrefoil ribbon, from which hangs a cord and tassel. The legs are square, decorated with sunk panels carved with scrolls and rosettes at the corners. The front of the seat is slightly serpentine, and the cover is of needlework, studded with a double row of brass nails.

Chippendale is very particular in giving directions for the proper upholstery. Thus, for a set of eighteen chairs, he says:

"The seats look best when stuffed over the rails and have a brass border neatly chased; but are most commonly done with brass nails in one or two rows; and sometimes the nails are done to imitate fretwork. They are usually covered with the same stuff as the window curtains. The height of the back seldom exceeds twenty-two inches above the seats."



CHIPPENDALE CHAIR-BACK, 1754

Again for French chairs with elbows: "The little moulding, round the bottom of the edge of the rails, has a good effect. The backs and seats are stuffed and covered with Spanish leather or damask, etc., and nailed with brass nails. The seat is 27 inches wide in front, 22 inches from the front to the back,

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PLATE XCV

Chippendale Chairs

Metropolitan Museum

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and 23 inches wide behind; the height of the back is 25 inches, and the height of the seat 14½ including casters."

Chippendale also recommends tapestry or other sort of needlework for seats.

"Nine designs of chairs after the Chinese manner are very proper for a lady's dressing-room; especially if it is hung with India paper. They will likewise suit Chinese temples. They have commonly cane-bottoms with loose cushions; but, if required, may have slipped seats and brass nails. The backs and seats are of fretwork. The seat is 19 inches deep, 17 inches long; the back 20 inches high, and the legs, from floor to seat, 17 inches; and those made of pierced fretwork are 2½ inches wide."

The dimensions of nine other chairs in "the Chinese manner" are as follows: Width of the square leg, 2½ inches; seat front rail, 1 foot 10 inches; back of seat, 19 inches; depth, 17½; height of back, 19½ inches. Another had a leg 1½ inches wide; 17 inches high, front seat rail, 22½ inches; back of seat, 19 inches; depth, 17 inches; height of back from seat, 20 inches.

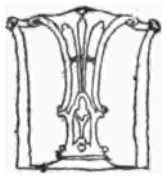
The old "crown-back" survives in the chair on Plate XCVII. though a Chippendale model. The back is massive, the side supports have splayed angles, and the top is wavy. Scrolls, foliage and blossoms run on both sides from a small central shell. The centre splat is of a tall vase form, carved and pierced with foliage, flowers and reversed scrolls. The legs are cabriole with, however, slight spring; and are carved on the knees with scroll foliage. The feet are spiral scrolls.

Chippendale's "sofa for a grand apartment" differs little from one designed by Meissonier for the Grand Marshal of Poland in 1735. Ornate as Meissonier's *canapé* is, Chippendale's is even more elaborate, for the carving consists of shells and a Cupid on the centre of the top rail, with

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two large birds and bunches of flowers below him. "If gilt, with burnished gold," says Chippendale, "the whole will have a noble appearance. The dimensions are 9 feet long without the scrolls, the broadest part of the seat from front to back, 2 feet 6 inches; the height of the back from the seat, 3 feet 6 inches, and the height of the seat, 1 foot 2 inches, without casters."

When sofas are made large, "they have a bolster and pillow at each end and cushions at the back which may be laid down occasionally and form a mattress. The sizes differ greatly; but commonly they are from 6 to 9 or 10 feet long; the depth of the seat from front to back, from 2 feet 3 inches to 3 feet; and the height of the seat, 1 foot 2 inches with casters. The scrolls are 18 to 19 inches high."



CHIPPENDALE CHAIR-BACK, 1754

Of the *chaise longue* Chippendale says: "This is what the French call *Péché Mortel.* They are sometimes made to take asunder in the middle; one part makes a large easy chair and the other a stool, and the feet join in the middle, which looks badly. It should have a thick mattress, 6 feet long in the clear, and 2 feet 6 inches to 2 feet broad." This is, of course, the *Duchesse* (see page 193).

Some of Chippendale's "Chinese sophas" could be converted into beds, and were supplied with canopies, curtains and valances, while others were sofas pure and simple. He gives one design which consists of a French *canapé* covered with silk, depicting a "gallant scene" in the style of Watteau; and over it a pagoda-shaped canopy adorned with bells and formal draperies in festoons.

The open-back settee of two or more chair backs was also a favorite. (See Plate XCVI.)

A Chippendale sofa in the "French style" is shown on

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PLATE XCVI

Chippendale Three-Chair Back Settee, Mahogany, Covered with Mortlake Tapestry

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Plate XCVII., supported on seven legs, the four front ones cabriole, and carved with shells at the spring and ending in lions' feet. The arms terminate in carved lions' heads and spread out gracefully. The upholstery is old English needlework representing landscapes and pastoral scenes, put on with brass-beading. The arms are also partly covered with the tapestry. The piece is 5 feet 7 inches long.

Heppelwhite furniture is valued by collectors for its beautiful workmanship, durability and general lightness of effect; and, if the proportions are not always satisfactory, it must be remembered that Heppelwhite frequently made furniture — particularly chairs — "according to the size of the room or pleasure of the purchaser."

The Heppelwhite chair is very famous. Its proportions are: height, 3 feet 1 inch; height to seat frame, 17 inches; depth of seat 17 inches; and width of seat in front, 20 inches. The legs are straight and never connected by stretchers, but are frequently ornamented with the husk or bell-flower inlaid in pale satin-wood or carved in low relief. The tapering leg usually ends in the "spade" foot, sometimes called the "Marlborough" foot. The backs are usually shield, or heart-shaped, and are ornamented with the three feathers of the Prince of Wales, the urn (draped or undraped), swags of drapery, festoons of the bell-flower, the lotus, rosette and patera, and draped *tazza*.

Although most people associate mahogany with Heppelwhite, he did not by any means restrict himself to this wood for frames of seats. He writes:

"For chairs, a new and very elegant fashion has arisen within these few years, of finishing them with painted or japanned work, which gives a rich and splendid appearance to the minuter parts of the ornaments, which are generally thrown in by the painters. Several of these designs (his own) are particularly adapted to this style, which allows a

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framework less massy than is requisite for mahogany, and by assorting the prevailing color to the furniture and light of the room, affords opportunity, by the variety of grounds which may be introduced, to make the whole accord in harmony, with a pleasing and striking effect to the eye."

Chairs with stuffed backs Heppelwhite calls cabriole chairs, and gives one "of the newest fashion." This has a shield-shaped back, a little cushion on the arm fastened by means of tiny nails, and legs representing reeds bound with ribbon. A square patera hides the joining.

Among the designs of twelve chair-backs, "proper to be executed in mahogany or japan," he says some of them are "applicable to the more elegant kind of chairs with back and seats of red, or blue, morocco leather; in these backs, which are sometimes made a little circular, are frequently inserted medallions, printed or painted on silk of the natural colors; when the back and seats are of leather, they should be tied down with tassels of silk or thread."

It is noticeable that Heppelwhite generally uses the brass-headed nail for fastening his coverings to the frames of seats. These nails are placed very close together and are frequently arranged around the edge of the seat in the form of festoons or scallops.

For drawing-room chairs, he insists upon silks and satins, with printed oval medallions, or floral designs on light backgrounds; but he prefers the stripe to everything else. When blue or red morocco leather was used it was put on with ornamental brass nails. In some cases "the leather backs, or seats, should be tied down with tassels of silk or thread."

For the open back and curved chair, the seat covering was of silk, satin, leather and horsehair. The latter was plain, striped, figured or checked.

"Mahogany chairs," he says, "should have the seats

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PLATE XCVII

Chippendale Settee, Mahogany, Covered with Needlework

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of horsehair, plain, striped, checquered, etc., at pleasure, or cane bottoms with cushions, the cases of which should be covered with the same as the curtains."

"Stools," Heppelwhite remarks, "should match the chairs, the framework should be of mahogany, or japanned, and, of course, should be covered like the chairs."

Among Heppelwhite's most charming creations are his "Window stools," in reality small sofas, the ends of which are alike. They are intended to be placed directly under the window and "their size must be regulated by the size of the place where they are to stand; their heights should not exceed the heights of the chairs." Their frames were like the chairs, of mahogany or painted in some light color, or japanned and covered like the chairs. Some of them had tufted seats ornamented with buttons, and some of them were finished with a festooned valance, decorated at intervals with a tiny tassel.

The proportion of Heppelwhite's sofa was usually from six to seven feet in length; the depth about thirty inches; and the height of the seat frame fourteen inches; height of the back, 3 feet 1 inch. "The woodwork," to quote from Heppelwhite's directions, "should be either mahogany or japanned, in accordance to the chairs, and the covering also must be of the same." The newest fashion was an oblong sofa, "the frame japanned with green on a white ground and the edges gilt; the covering of red morocco leather."

Of the *confidante* (see page 193), he says: "This piece of furniture is of French origin, and is in pretty general request for large and spacious suites of apartments. An elegant drawing-room, with modern furniture, is scarce complete without a *confidante,* the extent of which may be about nine feet, subject to the same regulations as sofas. This piece of furniture is something so constructed that

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the ends take away and leave a regular sofa; the ends may be used as *Barjair chairs*" (see page 192).

Of the *Duchesse*, he also says, "This piece of furniture is derived from the French. Two *Barjair* chairs of proper construction, with a stool in the middle, form the *Duchesse*, which is allotted to large and spacious ante-rooms; the covering may be various, as also the framework, and made from six to eight feet long. The stuffing may be of the round manner, or low-stuffed with a loose squab, or bordered cushion, fitted to each part. *Confidantes*, sofas and chairs may be stuffed in the same manner."

The "bar-back" was a novelty. It appeared as if four open-back chairs were placed side by side, the end ones, of course, supplied with an arm. Though we are told that this sofa was a recent invention, it was only a development of the old double chair (see Plate LXXXV.). "The lightness of its appearance has procured it a favorable reception in the first circles of fashion. The pattern of the back must match the chairs; these will also regulate the sort of framework and covering."

Sheraton was particularly fond of the leg reeded, turned and decorated with twisted flutes and fillets. We find upon his chair the husk, or bell-flower, the festoon, the lyre, the vase, the column, the lotus, the urn and the patera used to hide the joining of chair frames. His drawing-room furniture is preferably white and gold, rosewood, ordinary wood painted and japanned. Although mahogany was used for chairs with carved backs, they are never seen out of the library, dining and bedrooms. The upholstery for the drawing-room seats was of silk or satin in oval medallions or stripes.

Sheraton writes: "It appears from some of the latest specimens of French chairs, some of which we have been favored with a view of, that they follow the antique taste,

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PLATE XCVIII
Adam Chairs

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and introduce into their arms and legs various heads of animals; and that mahogany is the chief wood used in their best chairs, into which they bring in portions of ornamental brass; and, in my opinion, not without a proper effect, when due restraint is laid on the quantity." His drawing-room chairs followed the French taste of the day. They were gilded, painted in any color and covered with silk. In 1792 he recommends an arm-chair of carved mahogany or black rosewood and gold; and "if a brass-beading is put round the stuffing to hide the tacks," this chair, he tells us, "will produce a lively effect." Another chair frame he wishes "finished in burnished gold, the seat and back covered with printed silk. In the front rail is a table with a little carving in its panels. The legs and stumps have twisted flutes and fillets done in the turning, which produce a good effect in the gold." Among his designs, we find chairs of the latest French style, namely: "a hunting-chair with square back and wings," stuffed all over except the legs, which are of mahogany, and having a slide-out frame in front to make a resting-place for one that is fatigued, as hunters usually are; an "easy and warm" chair for sick persons called a "tub chair," with side wings coming forward to keep off the air; chairs that he calls "curricle" "from their being shaped like that kind of carriage," and another original design that he calls "Herculaneum," "so named on account of their antique style of composition."

His "Conversation chairs" follow precisely the model of the *voyelle* (see page 196).

The Sheraton settees also exhibit backs similar to those of his chairs — particularly those known as the "Fancy Chair." (See Plate C.)

Among Sheraton's latest designs is a *bergère* (1803) with a caned back and seats: "The stumps and legs are

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turned," he says, "and the frames generally painted." The *bergère* is rendered more comfortable with the addition of loose cushions. About this time cane became very popular. Sheraton informs us in 1803 that "Caning cabinet work is now more in use than it was ever known to be. About thirty years since, it was quite gone out of fashion, but on the revival of japanning furniture it began to be brought gradually into use, so that at present it is introduced into several pieces of furniture which it was not a few years past."

Two chairs from a set of Sheraton satin-wood furniture consisting of six chairs and a settee, with four-chair back supported on right legs (Plate XLII.) show the beginning of the "Fancy Chair." The backs have a rectangular panel of open trellis and rosettes at each intersection. The top rail is painted. The side supports and rail of the cane seats painted with arabesque foliage in *grisaille*. The front legs are turned balusters; the back, continuations of the side supports.

Sheraton's stuffed sofas resembled the sofas in use in France, and matched the chairs. Two sofas accompanied the drawing-room set of seats, and the seat of his sofa was stuffed up in front about three inches high above the rail. "Our sofas," he says, "are never covered with a carpet, but with various pattern cottons and silks."

He also gave designs for Grecian squabs or couches, the frames turned up at one end and made of white and gold or mahogany; the *chaise longue* with "a stuffed back and arm at each side with a bolster," their use being "to rest or loll upon after dinner"; and the Turkey sofa, a novelty recently introduced into the most fashionable homes. "They are," Sheraton remarks, "an imitation of the Turkish mode of sitting and are made very low, scarcely exceeding a foot to the upper side of the cushion."

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PLATE XCIX

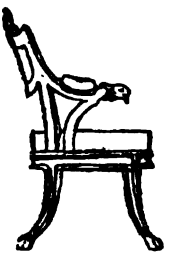
Heppelwhite Shield-back Chairs

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Seats

During the *Directoire,* the open-backed chair increased in popularity, and remained a favorite in the days of the Empire. The lion's head reigned for a time as a decoration for the arm or elbow, but was soon superseded by the sphinx and the swan's head, — two very characteristic motives of this period. Gondola-shaped chairs, bar-backed chairs and heavy scrolled arm-chairs, as well as the double arm-chair that followed the style of the sofa, reigned during this period.



DIRECTOIRE, 1796

A set of drawing-room furniture consisted of two sofas, always placed on either side of the chimney-piece, six arm-chairs, six chairs, two *bergères* and *two tabourets.*

The draped sofa disappeared, and the most popular was the *canapé pommier,* the back of which was low and square and extended round the sides to take the place of arms. The back of the sofa was stuffed but not the sides or wings. A feather pillow, covered with the same material as the sofa, was placed at each end. Figured damask, satin, tapestry, or printed cloth, put on with braid, was used for upholstering these sofas. The *méridienne* was a variation of the *canapé pommier,* introduced during the *Directoire* period.

The *banquette* and *chaise longue* and the *bergère en gondole* with a low and rounded back were very popular. The divan came in during the last days of the Empire period. It came from the East.

The framework for chairs was mahogany or painted and bronzed, and frequently, in very rich houses, of gilded wood. Gondola-shaped chairs and heavy scrolled arm-chairs were the favorites for drawing-rooms. The square form was the most popular, and the arm-chair and double arm-chair were rarely supplied with extra cushions. Back

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and seats were stuffed and then covered with silks or satin of a solid color, with a design painted upon it. Braids were employed to hide the nails. Worsted damasks and printed cottons were used for less expensive seats. Leather was often chosen for the library and dining-room chairs.

The bar-back, or open back, chair was very popular, and legs were often X-shaped. Sometimes the front leg was cut in the form of a sabre. The shield shape, too, was popular for the back, ornamented with military trophies, or laurel leaves. Desk chairs were of the round or gondola form, and the feet generally in the console shape, or carved like chimæræ, or lions, whose heads came up to the level of the arms.

The following extracts from sales at Christie's auction rooms, 1797–1800, will give an idea of fashionable seats at the close of the century:

" 4 chair seats, flowers on yellow velveteen.

8 landscapes for chair backs, greys on blue satin.

6 chair seats and 6 chair backs, arabesque in greys on blue satin.

6 chair seats and 6 chair backs, arabesque in greys on yellow satin.

12 ornaments, antique reliefs, purple on white satin for chair backs.

12 tablets for chair backs, antique brown on white satin.

12 tablets for chair backs, antique blue on white satin.

6 chair backs, greys on green dimity.

1 chair and seat, greys on poppy-colored satin.

6 chair backs or fire screens, colors on white satin.

6 mahogany vase-back chairs and 1 elbow chair, with horsehair seats, brass-nailed.

6 mahogany square-back chairs with horsehair seats, brass-nailed.

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PLATE C

Sheraton Four-back Settee, Cane-seat

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12 mahogany back-stool chairs covered with crimson damask, brass-nailed.

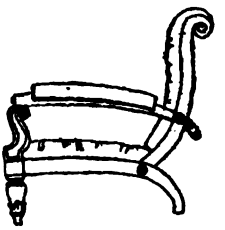
10 green and gold japanned elbow chairs, green mixed damask seats.

1 mahogany cabriole chair covered with crimson velvet.

8 mahogany wheel-back elbow-chairs, fluted legs on castors.

4 japanned bamboo elbow-chairs and cushions.

A drawing-room suite in green and gold consisting of a sofa and two bolsters, 6 plain cabriole chairs and 12 elbow chairs, covered with white figured satin and cotton cases."



EASY CHAIR WITH ADJUSTABLE BACK, BY SMITH

The Fancy Chair (see page 85) was popular in New York. In 1797, "William Challen, Fancy Chair-maker from London, makes all sorts of dyed, japanned, wangee and bamboo chairs, settees, etc., and every article in the Fancy Chair line, executed in the neatest manner and after the newest and most approved London patterns."

From this date onward we have many advertisements in the New York papers of men who make Fancy and Windsor chairs, and undertake to regild and paint old chairs in the newest fashion. In 1802, we read:

"Fancy Chairs and cornices — William Palmer, No. 2 Nassau Street, near the Federal Hall, has for sale a large assortment of elegant well-made and highly finished, black and gold, etc., Fancy Chairs with cane and rush bottoms. He has also some of the newest pattern cornices and a variety of other articles in the Japan line. Old chairs repaired, regilt, etc., at the lowest price and agreeably to any pattern. Ornamental painting and gilding neatly executed."

In 1810, "Paterson & Dennis, No. 54 John Street, inform

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their friends and the public that they have now on hand a large and very elegant assortment of Fancy chairs of the newest patterns and finished in a superior style. Elegant white, coquelico, green, etc., and gilt drawing-room chairs, with cane and rush seats, together with a handsome assortment of dining and bedroom chairs, etc."

Two years later, "Asa Holden, 32 Broad Street, has a superb assortment of highly finished Fancy Chairs, such as double and single cross, fret, chain, gold, ball and spindle back, with cane and rush seats, etc., of the latest and most fashionable patterns. The cane seats are warranted to be American made, which are well known to be much superior to any imported from India." (1812.)

In 1817, "Wheaton and Davies, Fancy Chair manufacturers, have removed from No. 15 Bowery to 153 Fulton Street, opposite St. Paul's Church, where they offer for sale an elegant assortment of curled maple, painted, ornamented, landscape, sewing and rocking-chairs, lounges, settees, sofas, music-stools, etc. Old chairs repaired, painted and ornamented."

A favorite chair of the period was the "Trafalgar," which received its name from Nelson's great victory. This chair was generally of mahogany, and was in vogue as late as 1830.



CHAISE À VOLUTES, RESTORATION PERIOD

From 1800 to 1825, we read of "Fancy and Windsor chairs; chairs with rattan bottoms; rosewood and Fancy painted chairs; chairs with cane and rush seats; bamboo; Grecian back; elegant mahogany chairs, eagle pattern; Trafalgar with landscapes; Fancy Chairs, richly gilt, with real gold and bronze; rosewood covered with yellow plush; mahogany with plain and figured hair seating; Grecian sofas with scroll ends; imitation rosewood chairs, cane seats; square and round

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PLATE CI

Early Nineteenth Century Chairs

Metropolitan Museum

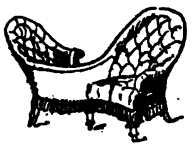
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front Fancy gilt chairs; Grecian sofas, inlaid with rose and satin-wood; three banded back and scroll-end sofas; two superb settees with elegant damask cushions, pillows, etc., and twelve cane seat, white and gold chairs to match; rosewood sofa covered with yellow plush and twelve chairs to match; and six scroll-end sofas covered with red damask, inlaid with rosewood, gilt and bronzed feet."

Black haircloth seating is especially advertised in 1824, but haircloth for seats had been in use since the middle of the Eighteenth Century.

During the Restoration, which lasted from 1815 to 1830, the chairs followed the general character of the Empire. The square backs, however, became slightly more curved, and the rounded arms were terminated by a dolphin's head, a volute or scroll, or the neck or head of a swan. The feet were either straight and grooved, or were in the form of a scroll, and very little carving was used.



VIS-À-VIS OR SIAMOISE, BY LALONDE

Some models were imported from England and Germany, such as the gondola; but these were more suitable for the boudoir and sitting-room than the stately drawing-room.

The chief woods were mahogany and palissandre. The latter was often enriched with threads of copper. Maple was also used, inlaid with amaranth and elm-root.

The chairs and sofas were upholstered like those of the Empire and covered with similar materials, but the damask was frequently decorated with motives of yellow or white or silver. Damask and silk from Lyons and Tours was in great demand, and "English" and "Persian." Braid and borders were used to hide the nails, as in the days of the Empire.

Under the *Directoire* and the Empire every drawing-

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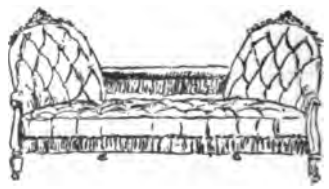
room had a sofa on either side of the chimney. One of the favorite forms was the ***méridienne,*** which was not abandoned until about 1830. (See page 89.) At that date the *causeuse* and the *tête-à-tête* replaced the ***méridienne*** on either side of the hearth. The ***méridienne*** was never tufted and was usually covered with tapestry called "Henry," or worsted damask, also called "English damask." The covering was put on plain with an ornamental braid for a border.



FAUTEUIL À VOLTAIRE

The form of the *chaise longue* of the period varied according to the style of the *fauteuils* that accompanied it, and also according to the fancy of the maker. It was often of the rounded or gondola form, the back elevated on one side and ending on the other, with an elbow that extended the whole length of the chair. On the other side the back terminated in a long rail (*rampe*) or cushion that stopped as it turned on the side opposite the back. These *chaises longues* were made left and right.

During the early days of the Restoration *bergères* were used; but they soon gave place to the *fauteuils gondoles*. Deep arm-chairs appeared and then the popular *fauteuil*, called Voltaire, which seems to have been taken from England or Germany. How it got its name is a mystery, for Voltaire is never represented in one; and, indeed, it does not seem to have appeared until 1825. The Voltaire was an easy-chair, deep and low with an inclined back that could be adjusted at the pleasure of the lounger. It was generally supplied with extra cushions.



CAUSEUSE

About 1838 the *chaises confortables* appeared. Havard

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PLATE CII

Nineteenth Century Chairs, by George Smith (1804–1810)

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says that much as seats had been padded and covered in former days it was Dervilliers who, in 1838, originated furniture that was completely upholstered and perfected later by Jeanselme and Sellier. "A throng of pieces sprung from this innovation: all the *crapauds*, *poufs*, *seymours*, and *bébés* date from this epoch, if not in name, at least in form as '*confortable*.'"



CHAISE CONFORTABLE, "SPANISCHER", 1835

The *chaises confortables* appeared in all forms — gondola, square, oval, Voltaire, *anglaise*, and the peculiar "*Spanischer*," which was probably German. The feet were grooved or in the sabre form.

The sofas were of peculiar shapes and names. The *canapé Marcus* enjoyed a certain vogue, receiving its name from a popular maker of the Restoration period. The seat was much lower and deeper than that of the ordinary sofa, and the back and cheeks were curved, and sides and elbows were very high. The framework was visible and carved or plain. The *canapé Marcus* was a sort of *divan-canapé*.

Then there was the *Borne*, a round or oval *canapé* or sofa that came into fashion after the Empire. It was like a row of chairs placed back to back in a circle, with a column or pedestal in the centre for a vase of flowers or a statue. It was much used in drawing-rooms and galleries, and was made square, octagon, pentagon, round or oval, and in all sizes.



CONFIDANT À TROIS PLACES, OR SIAMOISE

The S or Siamoise was long popular. It was also an upholstered sofa with two or three seats joined together like the Siamese twins. It stood in the centre or corners of the drawing-room. From the fact that people sit in it and talk cosily, it received the name *tête-à-tête*.

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The most peculiar seat of all was perhaps the *Pouf*, or *Puff*, a sort of cushion without arms or back. It was generally round, but occasionally it was oval or even square. It stood as high as the seat of a chair and was decorated with fringe. The first *Poufs* were made about 1845 and were very expensive. They were covered with rich material — damask, tapestry, brocade, or fine needlework. The *Pouf* was placed in the centre of a circle of chairs around the hearth; but it was a very uncomfortable seat.



POUF

Seats grew lower and lower during the Second Empire until some critics thought it would be more comfortable to go a little further and have cushions on the floor. Deville was quite horrified at the lounging attitudes of the ladies and gentlemen on these sofas and low easy-chairs, and asked if they were really the descendants of the old French society that formerly shone so brilliantly with its *belle tenue* and *savoir vivre*; and took refuge in the happy thought that those *fauteuils* would soon be but a memory of the Second Empire.



FAUTEUIL À CONFER, 1850

In 1817, Christian, cabinet-maker, 35 Wall Street, has Grecian sofas for sale; at the Fancy Mahogany Chair and Sofa Manufactory, 153 Fulton Street, Wheaton & Davis have rosewood and Fancy painted chairs and sofas richly ornamented in gold and bronze, with hair, cane and rush seats (1819); and in 1823 sofas with plain and round tops and scroll ends, and rosewood sofas, with rich damask satin covering, come to auction. The Grecian sofa is very fashionable for many years.



FRENCH, 1850

In 1817 an Ottoman for a gallery is recommended.

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PLATE CIII

"Trafalgar Chair" and Chair by Duncan Phyffe (owned by Mr. R. T. Haines Halsey, New York)

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"The framework is composed of the valuable woods enriched with carved work finished in burnished gold. The draperies are buff-colored velvet, the pattern being embroidered on its surface and bounded by bullion lace."



CHAISE CONFORTABLE, BY DERVILLIERS, 1838

A sofa designed by J. Taylor in 1821 is described as follows:

"For decorations of the highest class the framework would be entirely gilt in burnished and matt gold, the pillows and covering of satin damask or velvet, relieved by wove gold lace and tassels. For furniture of less splendor the frame would be of rosewood, with the carved work partly gilt and the covering of more simple materials."

Chairs made in New York in the first quarter of the Nineteenth Century, by Duncan Phyffe, appear on Plates XLIV. and CIII.

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V

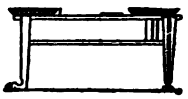
TABLES

EGYPTIAN tables were quite simple in form and their ornamentation consisted of painting and inlay. In the ordinary home they were scarce, because people who use the floor for a seat have little use for tables.

"The old Greeks and Romans did not sit at table as we moderns do, but like the eastern races of to-day, reclined on couches each long enough for three guests, for there were always three or nine at table, the number of the Graces or Muses. Their tables were much lower than those of the following ages, for there was no necessity to provide space for the accommodation of man's extremities, neither did the tops of the table project as do those of later times. The couches occupied three sides of the table, the fourth was left free for the convenience of serving. The tables themselves were sometimes quite simple; but costly materials were often used for those belonging to the rich Romans, whose love of luxury and magnificence extended not only to the table ornaments and utensils but also to the tables themselves, the supports of which were sometimes of precious metals, the top being formed of a marble slab. Nor was this extravagance confined to the Romans, for we read that the Emperor Lothar (A. D. 842) had one of his magnificent tables, which was made of gold, cut up into pieces and divided among his



ROMAN TABLE



GREEK TABLE

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PLATE CIV

Sixteenth Century Flemish Table (Sambin School)
Table à l'éventail

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followers. Mosaics of tortoise-shell and ivory were also used for the adornment of the tables of the ancients; indeed, here, as in all things, thought and artistic skill were brought into juxtaposition to produce noble work. Costly woods were brought from afar for their use, the glorious *Thuja arbor vitæ* from the forests of the Atlas Mountains was used for the profile, which was formed from a single piece cut as near as possible to the root of the tree where the markings were most beautiful, resembling the eyes of the peacock's feather or the richness of lines and coloring of the skin of a tiger. In this as also in the following ages metal was used for tables, which were round or oblong in form, the former being used as now when the number of diners was limited. But more often they were of oak, pine, chestnut, pitch-pine, or other scented woods; while the trestles were made of simple wooden laths, in contradistinction to those of the Romans, whose trestles were elaborate monuments of art." [1]

The Byzantine tables had columnar legs and sometimes lions' feet. Some also were small and round and stood on one support ending in three feet. The tables for meals were very low.



ANGLO-SAXON TABLE

The tables at which the Germans and Scandinavians feasted were very massive and had four strong legs. There were also sideboards supported by saw-bucks. The Franks also had big, heavy rectangular tables, and small, light round ones. Charlemagne had three silver tables and one of gold. These were engraved with a map of the heavens, and with plans of Rome and Constantinople. In the Tenth Century, the dining-tables were sometimes rectangular and sometimes semi-circular, and rested on upright legs or on X-shaped supports that could be folded up. Round and oval tables came into fashion about 1150; but the

[1] A. S. Levetus.

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rectangular shape returned to favor in the Thirteenth Century.

Until the Sixteenth Century the word "table" was not used in its present sense. Board was the word in use; and it was perfectly descriptive, for the dining-table consisted of a simple board supported on trestles. In the great hall, the board was large, consisting of a great oaken plank, or planks. Sometimes this board was hinged and could be turned against the wall. It was always supported by trestles.



GERMAN TABLE, FIFTEENTH CENTURY

Besides wooden tables there were great banqueting-tables of stone in the halls of princes and kings. Froissart mentions one in describing the festivities on the entry of Queen Isabella into Paris in 1389. "You must know that the great table of marble, which is in the hall and is never removed, was covered with an oaken plank, four inches thick, and the royal dishes placed thereon. Near the table, and against one of the pillars, was the king's buffet, magnificently decked out with gold and silver plate, and much envied by many who saw it. Before the king's table, and at the same distance, were wooden bars with three entrances, at which were sergeants-at-arms, ushers and archers, to prevent any from passing them but those who served the table; for in truth the crowd was so very great that there was no moving but with much difficulty. There were plenty of minstrels, who played away to the best of their abilities."

The table at which the king was sitting was a very famous one. In Sauval's *Antiquités de Paris,* we read:

"At one end of the hall of the Palace was placed a marble table that filled up almost the whole breadth of it, and was of such a size for length, breadth and thickness,

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PLATE CV

Gate-legged Table

Metropolitan Museum

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that it was supposed to be the greatest slab of marble existing."

It served, for two or three hundred years, very different purposes: "at one time for a theatre, on which the attorneys' clerks acted their mummeries, and at another for the royal feasts, where only emperors, kings, and princes of the blood were admitted, with their ladies: the other great lords dined at separate tables. It was consumed by fire in 1618."

The other tables were evidently the usual board and trestles; if they had been of heavy, solid oak, they would have been pushed aside by pressure instead of being upset. Froissart, who was present at the above-mentioned feast, tells us: "There were two other tables in the hall, at which were seated upward of five hundred ladies and damsels; but the crowd was so very great, it was with difficulty they could be served with their dinner which was plentiful and sumptuous. There were so many people on all sides, several were stifled by the heat; and one table near the door of the chamber of parliament, at which a numerous company of ladies and damsels was seated, was thrown down, and the company forced to make off as well as they could."

In the Fourteenth Century Jean of Burgundy had "two dining-tables," one with folding leaves, and both with feet of ebony and ivory.

The Renaissance tables are only rich elaborations of the board and trestles. The workmen had only to connect the struts of the trestles in the centre of the table in order to produce a rough model of the richly-carved tables in vogue from the days of Henri II. to Louis XIV.

The usual model was a table standing on four feet joined by stretchers, or standing on two rails, also united by a cross-piece. In very ornate tables, however, the end supports, which spread out in the shape of a fan, were carved in a very complicated style. From the stretcher, or cross-

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piece, slender columns or pillars rise to support the centre of the slab, while the ends are supported by the elaborately carved scrolls or fan, on which appear masques, satyrs, mermaids, dragons, or rams' heads garlanded. Each of these ends in turn stands on a foot, terminating in a horse's head, lion's foot, or a scroll. The slab of the table is ornamented with a decorative edge of gadroons or scrolls, or marquetry, and the corners are decorated with mascarons or the muzzles of lions, and, perhaps, a drop ornament. These tables could be lengthened by means of a sort of sliding shelf that was concealed at each end. Thus the surface of the table could be doubled. All these tables stood much higher than the modern tables, just as the chairs of the same period did. Several beautiful examples by Hugues Sambin and his school are still in existence in museums and private collections. One by Sambin, in the Museum of Besançon, is always held up as a model of his work. It is decorated with foliage and carved ornaments, and upheld by two fan-shaped supports consisting of great scrolls ending in lions' claws at the base and rams' heads at the top, and framing the head of a grinning satyr. From this head hangs a swag of flowers.

A table belonging to the Sambin School appears on Plate CIV. It has a long stretcher on which the supporting columns rest, and these columns are further connected with arches at the top. The side supports are very massive, and are heavily carved with Renaissance figures and chimæræ.

On the same Plate is shown a beautiful table of the Sixteenth Century resting on six legs, joined by one long stretcher and two cross-pieces, and decorated at the four corners with four large acorn-shaped drop ornaments that add a graceful touch to the severity of the design. This is a typical and beautiful specimen of Louis XIII. furniture.

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PLATE CVI

Gate-legged Table and Oval Table

Metropolitan Museum

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Tables

When the Florentine mosaic work, composed of precious stones, semi-precious stones, or pebbles from the bed of the Arno, and mosaics of wood of different colors became the rage, succeeding the *tarsia*-work of the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries, tables were considered especially appropriate for this kind of decoration. On a big figure, or slab, of marble or slate — usually dark in tint, though sometimes of pure white — the small pieces were arranged according to a pattern or picture, and then the whole was polished. The famous table of the *château de Richelieu* (6 feet by 4 feet), valued at 900,000 francs, now in the Louvre, was made in Florence when this kind of work was most fashionable.

Francesco de' Medici ordered a splendid library table from Bernardo Buontolenti, which is described by Vasari as made of "ebony, veneered with ebony, divided into compartments by columns of heliotrope, oriental jasper and lapis-lazuli, which have the vases and capitals of chased silver. The work is, furthermore, enriched with jewels, beautiful ornaments of silver, and exquisite little figures interspersed with miniatures and terminal figures of silver and gold, in full relief, united in pairs. There are, besides, other compartments formed of jasper, agates, heliotropes, sardonyxes, cornelians, and other precious stones."

When the new styles of the Seventeenth Century supplanted the sumptuously carved furniture of the Valois period, the table disappeared beneath its cover, which, garnished with fringe, touched the floor. The tables of this period stood on spiral legs connected by a spirally turned cross-bar, or stretcher, that ran directly through the centre, or that connected all four legs. If the stretcher was not spirally turned, it consisted of a flat bar that lay very close to the floor, joining the four legs, each of which terminated in a small flattened ball-foot. The table cloth fitted tightly

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over the slab and touched or swept the floor. The cloth was, in fact, a kind of case. This table was sometimes furnished with drawers and often decorated with inlay. The top slab could be lengthened at will.

A white cloth spread over the heavy cloth or rug that covered the slab, and a mirror hung on the wall above, appear in the pictures and prints of the period, show that the ordinary table served for the toilet. About 1640, the "drop leaf," or "hang ear" tables came into vogue. Many of these were made of solid walnut, or *sacredaan* wood.

In the Seventeenth Century, lightness was carried farther, and the table was simply supported by four turned legs with heavy bulb feet, connected with straining-rails close to the floor. These legs swelled out into the form of acorns (often curved) or globes, sometimes stained black, or picked out with black threads.

The peculiarity of the slab gave this special kind of table the descriptive name of "drawing-table." The drawing-table was, therefore, composed of extra leaves superimposed on lower ones that could be drawn forward so that the top leaves could fall into the space the lower ones made, and form with the leaves, thus lengthened, one continuous surface. The mechanism by which these leaves were lengthened and dropped was both intricate and ingenious.

Greater lightness being required, the legs were soon turned in plain spirals or with beading. A typical form now appears, which was either round or oval, and consisted of a frame with spirally turned legs and flaps, or falling leaves, that were supported by legs. These legs could be pulled forward when required; and, when not in use, folded back into the frame. These are called "gate-legged," or "thousand-legged tables," for they had six, eight, twelve, sixteen, or even twenty legs. The table could be

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PLATE CVII

Boulle Table

Wallace Gallery

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shut up into about one-third of its extended length. (See Plates CV. and CVI.)

This spiral kind of table was made in all sizes and of all kinds of wood. It even lasted until mahogany came into general use among the wealthy, for a fine example, owned by Sir William Johnson, is preserved in the Albany Institute and Historical and Art Society. It is of rich red mahogany, 29⅝ inches high, 6 feet, 6 inches long and 5 feet, 11 inches across the shortest diameter. The leaves drop or are supported by legs that fold into the frame. This table was confiscated in 1776.

The Flemings of the Seventeenth Century were particularly skilful in the production of tables and chairs. They made tables of all forms: dining-tables, writing-tables, card-tables, chair-tables, bureau-tables, round, square and oval tables, tables that stand on one foot, tables that stand on three feet, folding-tables and *tables à banc* (or bench tables). They were made of oak, maple, walnut, cedar, cypress, marble and sometimes of silver, of mosaic and of marquetry; and they were beautifully carved and embellished with gold.

In the time of Louis XIV. tables were ornate and handsome. The finest were of carved and gilded wood with term-shaped legs connected by straining-rails. Some had the hind's foot (*pied de biche*). Tables were also made of violet-wood, walnut, pine, cherry, or other woods with simple turned feet; and these were covered with a cloth that matched the hangings of the room. Marquetry was also a favorite ornamentation for tables at this period.

The *guéridon,* or small tripod table, consisting of a column ending in three feet and supporting a small, round top, seems to have made its advent at this time. It was much used for cards. Other card-tables were three-cornered, or cut into five faces.

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Console-tables often stood with their backs against a pier-glass. Their slabs were of handsome marble, or mosaic, and their frames very elaborate and heavy.

Boulle's tables are superb.

A handsome table from the Wallace Gallery appears on Plate CVII. This shows how the Boulles kept up with the fashion. Here we have a graceful sweeping line for the legs, and the two smaller drawers are separated from the larger one in the centre by a graceful sweeping crescent in gilt bronze. The mascarons at the corners and that decorate the handles of the drawers are *or moulu* as are also the leaf-shoes of the feet.

Molière, who died in 1673, had among his effects "two small carved loo tables of gilded wood with three eaglet's claws for feet, painted bronze color, top hexagonal (80 *livres*); a little table with pillars of turned wood; a wooden table with parquet top representing flowers (30 *livres*), and two small tables of similar wood (18 *livres*)"; also a "Turkish table cover," valued at 15 *livres*.

Marot's tables differ a little from those in use in France. Of course, they have the characteristic Marot ornamentation. As the Eighteenth Century progresses, marquetry is more and more used as a decoration for table tops and even the legs are inlaid with floral ornaments. The legs grow slimmer and the term-shaped leg with flat ball feet, connected by stretchers, gives place to the cabriole that first ends in the simple hoof and later in the ball-and-claw foot.

The console-table, with gilded frame and marble slab, is greatly used in the Louis XV. period. In fact, it occurs in almost every room. In the bedroom, it stands between the two principal windows, opposite the bed. There are usually two consoles in the *salon*. (See Plate CIX.)

The frames are ornate and exhibit a bewildering combination of scrolls, flowers, leaves, twisting dragons and

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PLATE CVIII

Sideboard-Table, William and Mary Period; Oak Dining-Table;
Seventeenth Century English Dressing-Tables

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shells. In the days of the Regency the favorite monkey is sometimes climbing and peering through the foliage.

The taste of Louis XV. for small rooms, and, more particularly, for little suppers, banished rigid etiquette and ceremony. Ingenious mechanics now invented tables and buffets for informal service, — pieces in which shelves could be made to rise and fall, and which contained various contrivances to raise dumb-waiters. The cabinet-makers, too, were skilful, and, therefore, the tables of Choisy, Versailles and Trianon are classed among the most sumptuous and ingenious works of the day. Many persons were engaged upon the famous " moving table " of Choisy. Sulpice, the cabinet-maker, designed it; Guérin made the mechanism for the model; the table itself was made by Léchaudé; Loret, the goldsmith, furnished the copper and silver mounts; and Loriau supplied the cables. A movable buffet was made for similar apartments in Versailles.

In the middle of the Eighteenth Century, tables were made with movable tops; tops that could be raised or lowered; writing tables, at which one stood up to write; and tables "*en croissant.*" In 1754 Madame de Pompadour had a writing-table in the form of a crescent, with a desk. It was inlaid with rosewood and satin-wood and feet and mounts of *or moulu.* A table in the Louvre, supposed to have belonged to the daughters of Louis XV., is of rosewood and satin-wood, beautifully ornamented with *or moulu,* the top covered with blue velvet, — the favorite material for covering the tops and lining the drawers of a lady's desk at this period.

Ladies' desks were charming: one called the *bonheur du jour* is very delicate in form and is made of ornamental woods.

The long bureau table, with a tier of shelves supplied with pigeon-holes, called *serre-papiers,* was a favorite writ-

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ing-table until the cylinder *bureau*, with the roll top, said to have been invented by Prince Kaunitz, drove it from the field.

On Plate CX. a charming table of this period is shown. It is of waved lines, made of veneered wood, the frieze ornamented with three panels of lattice-work of mother-of-pearl and red horn on a ground of horn, colored green, sprinkled with flowerets and framed in gilt-bronze scrolls. The ornaments on the spring of the leg and the leaf-shoes of the feet are gilded bronze. The slab, of wood and gilded bronze, is movable, and beneath it are two small drawers and one large drawer.

Until the Eighteenth Century the special dressing-table seems to have been unknown. Pictures of the period show ladies seated before a low table covered with a cloth, or in front of a *commode*, or table with drawers, or low case of drawers, resembling the one on Plate LII.

The *bureau de commode* often contained a drawer fitted up as a desk. It was probably because of this fact that the word *bureau* has been so frequently misused for the dressing-table.

When the straight line again dominated furniture in the Louis XVI. period, the table naturally yielded to the fashion. Tables were delicate and charming, and include writing-tables with ingenious appliances to lift the desks up and down to any height desired, pretty work-tables, that are also writing-desks, supplied with a tambour-shutter to conceal the shelves, dainty tea-tables and round, folding and square card-tables are numerous and varied. These are greatly prized by collectors, particularly if they are adorned with Sèvres plaques.

The *table servante*, a kind of dumb-waiter with drawers and shelves arranged in tiers, and standing on four grooved feet on casters, also became popular. This contained many

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PLATE CIX

Regency Console-Table
Metropolitan Museum

Louis XV. Console-Table
Louvre

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little drawers for various articles of table service. It frequently appears in the caricatures of Grandville, Charlet and H. Monnier.

More notable, however, was the advent of the extension dining-table standing on four, six, or eight feet, and opening in the middle. This appeared in France earlier than in England, where it is not found until about 1800.

Another popular table was the flower-table, or *jardinière*. It made its first appearance in the form of a square pier table, and was arranged for growing-plants, lined with lead, and frequently decorated with porcelain plaques. Sometimes it had an additional shelf for a globe of gold fish. The *table à fleurs* was placed in the drawing-room and boudoir. A description of one occurs in an advertisement in one of the Parisian newspapers in 1777:

"For sale a beautiful *table à fleurs*, now being made, of satin-wood, lined with lead, the four feet *à roulettes*, ornamented with gilded shoes, the rings forming the handles also *or moulu*, a drawer lined with lead to catch the water. Address, Thomas, rue de Menars."

The console-table was composed of straight, grooved legs, or legs grooved and tapering. The ornaments were very slight, such as, for example, a little gilded metal rail around the top and base, a rosette, a trophy, or some other ornament under the slab in the centre, and, perhaps, a little gold decoration on the legs. Sometimes the legs were joined by a straining-rail which had an ornament in the centre, or a little stand on which was placed a basket of flowers or a Sèvres vase. Sometimes the legs were formed of a classic head and bust ending in a term. Console-tables were made of mahogany, with brass trimmings; and they were also made of less expensive woods painted in bright hues. Gray was a favorite shade, particularly towards the close of the period. During the Reign of Terror "two consoles,

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painted in pearl-gray, elegantly ornamented with carving, and having very handsome slabs of Carara marble," are offered for sale.

Tables of gilded wood for the drawing-room went out of fashion and their places were taken by solid or veneered tables of violet-wood, amaranth, rosewood, or mahogany, decorated with brass-work. It is noticeable that during the Empire period the table cloth is never used. If the top was not a marble slab, then it was covered with a square of cloth or velvet, framed in a border of wood with a narrow metal moulding.

Turning now to the English styles of the second half of the Eighteenth Century, the importance of the card-table and tea-table can hardly be over-estimated. In very wealthy houses these were inlaid with ivory or mother-of-pearl, but in the ordinary prosperous home they were of walnut or mahogany. The card-table, with its claw-and-ball feet, and its stands for the candles at each corner and wells for the little fish that were used as counters before the days of "chips," of Anglo-Dutch form, is a model that lasted until late in the century, and is still found in old houses and prized by collectors. At such a table ladies of fashion in wide-spreading hoops of brocade and with enormous head-dresses, sat to settle the odd trick, the flames of the candles illuminating their rouged faces and causing their jewels to sparkle. At such a table Belinda probably played her famous game of ombre when she led to war her sable Matadores and

> "Spadillo first, unconquerable Lord
> Led off two captive Trumps and swept the Board,"

before she lost the graceful ringlet that formed the subject of *The Rape of the Lock*.

The round tea-table, supported on a tripod stand, was

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PLATE CX

Louis XV. Lady's Tables, Marquetry of Colored Woods.
Louis XV. Table with Panels of Lattice-work
Louis XV. Writing-Table and *Serre-Papiers*
Metropolitan Museum

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made of various sizes, from one that could support a tea-tray to one destined to hold merely the tea-kettle. In the latter case the stand had a little gallery, or high rail, above it. The top of the tea-table was made to revolve and to turn downwards when not in use. Hence it has received the popular name of "tip-and-turn." The edge was frequently bordered with a crinkled moulding, which to-day is often denominated "pie-crust."

Chippendale was very adept in the making of tables. His book contains every kind of table. His plates show: china-tables, dressing-tables, bureau-dressing-tables and *commodes*, writing-tables, library-tables, dressing and writing-tables, with bookcases, pier-glasses, and table frames, frames for marble slabs, sideboard-tables, bason stands, tea-kettle stands, candle stands, terms for busts, stands for china jars and pedestals, etc.

Chippendale's console-tables were derived from the French styles of the day and elaborately carved in the same manner as his picture and mirror frames, with subjects from mythology, or Æsop's Fables, scrolls, leaves, spiky tufts of grass, icicles, birds and Chinese figures. The slab was of marble.

His "buroe tables" are very simple, generally of two square tiers of drawers hollowed out in the centre and covered with a large slab. A little carving sometimes embellishes them.

His writing and library tables are generally "Gothic" in style. One has a writing drawer which draws out at one end and has term feet to support it, and the top "rises with a double horse to stand to read or write upon." They are variously supplied with partitions for books, pigeon-holes, drawers, flaps, etc., etc. Recesses are also cut for the knees; and are of a type long popular.

The lady's dressing-table under Chippendale's treatment

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often is a kind of *commode;* and, as a rule, he makes it of rosewood and decorates it with drapery. His glasses are made to come forward on hinges. This one, described in his book, is characteristic. "The glass made to come forward with folding hinges, is in a carved frame, and stands in a compartment that rests upon a plinth, between which are small drawers. The drapery is supported by Cupids and the petticoat goes behind the feet of the table, which looks better. The ornamental parts may be gilt in burnished gold or japanned."

Shaving-tables with folding tops and glasses that could be made "to rise out with a spring catch," were also made by Chippendale; and some of these had devices that could bring the glass forward when the gentleman was shaving.

The dining-tables from the beginning of the Eighteenth Century and throughout the Chippendale period consisted of two centre-pieces with wide flaps on either side and two semi-circular end pieces, all four divisions being joined together or separated at will by means of small brass adjustments. Each of the two larger portions stood on four cabriole legs, and the semi-circular pieces on two legs only; the latter, when not in use, were pushed up against the wall and served as side-tables.

These, however, are not to be confused with the sideboard-table, which took the place of the sideboard in Chippendale's day. A typical example is given on Plate CXI. It measures 2 feet 9½ inches high, 5 feet 10½ inches long, and 1 foot, 10¾ inches deep, is of oblong form, the corners splayed and slightly shaped to the outline of the legs. The frieze is boldly carved in relief with a lattice and scroll foliage design. The centre ornamented with reversed C-scrolls. The plain mahogany top with moulded border, is supported on cluster column legs of quatrefoil

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PLATE CXI

Chippendale Sideboard-Table
Chippendale Pier-Table

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section with moulded tie and plinths and carved acanthus foliage capitals.

A pier-table of the Chippendale style appears on Plate CXI. It is of oblong form, standing on four beautifully modelled cabriole legs, ending in a fine ball-and-claw. The front is carved with a pendant having a pierced shell in the centre. Arched scrolls and wave ornaments decorate the sides and ends, with corded string line, plain frieze and foliage border. The slab is black and white marble; length three feet.

Hepplewhite's book shows designs for library-tables, card-tables, pier-tables, Pembroke-tables, tambour-tables, dressing-tables and drawers, Rudd's tables, night-tables, candle-stands, terms for busts, and ornamental tops for pier-tables, Pembroke-tables, etc.

"Tables, in general," we learn from this book, "are made of the best mahogany. Their size is various, but their height should not exceed 28 inches.

"Card-tables may be either square, circular or oval: the inner part is lined with green cloth; the fronts may be enriched with inlaid or painted ornaments; the tops also admit of great elegance."

"Pembroke-tables are the most useful of this species of furniture; they may be of various shapes. The long, square and oval are the most fashionable." The tops are "inlaid, painted, or varnished." As a rule, there is a drawer below the top, the leaves or flaps of which fall on either side, as is shown in the example on Plate CXIV. from the Metropolitan Museum.

Heppelwhite's dressing-tables were remarkable for their ingenious arrangements of compartments for pins, combs, essences, jewelry and other articles for beautifying the person. He also had ingenious arrangements for causing the looking-glasses to rise from the slabs and drawers and

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swing easily on hinges. His shaving-tables were also marvels of convenience.

Heppelwhite described "Rudd's Dressing-table" as "the most complete dressing-table ever made, possessing every convenience which can be wanted. It derives its name from a once popular character from whom it was reported it was invented." In this piece of furniture the drawers could be made to swing about in any desired position, when the owner was dressing.

Library-tables were from 3 to 4 feet long, of mahogany, and covered on top with leather or green cloth. Some have cupboards in front for books or papers. Then there was a tambour writing-table and bookcase which was supplied with three drawers and a cylinder tambour-shutter that rolled back, revealing pigeon-holes and a writing-desk and nests of drawers. The upper part was a bookcase or series of shelves enclosed by two doors.

Pier-tables were "made to fit the pier and rise level with or above the dado of the room, nearly touching the ornaments of the glass." Above the pier-table the mirror hung, "fixed very low," nearly reaching the slab of the pier-table.

In the dining-room Heppelwhite called for "a set of dining-tables." This comprised a central, square table, and two semi-circular tables, which were used to extend the square table (one being placed at each end). When not in use, they stood between the windows, like the pier-tables in the drawing-room.

Sheraton also designed every variety of table, and among them novelties, for he kept up with and changed with the fashions of the time. Like Heppelwhite he considered pier-tables as indispensable to the furnishing of a fashionable drawing-room. He says:

"The pier-tables have marble tops and gold frames, or white and gold. The glasses are often made to appear to

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PLATE CXII

Eighteenth Century Tables: Mahogany Tea-Table "Tip and Turn" with "Pie-crust" edge; Mahogany Drop-leaf Table; Chippendale Tea-Table with Pierced Gallery; Chippendale Tea-Table with Pierced Gallery

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come down to the stretcher of the table; that is, a piece of glass is fixed in behind the pier-table, separate from the upper glass, and by reflection makes the table appear double. The small piece of glass may be fixed either in the dado of the room, or on the frame of the table. As pier-tables are merely for ornament under a glass they are generally made very light, and the style of finishing them is rich and elegant. Sometimes the tops are solid marble, but most commonly veneered in rich satin or other valuable wood, with a cross-band on the outside, a border about two inches, richly japanned, and a narrow cross-band beyond it, to go all round. The frames are commonly gold, or white, or burnished gold. Stretching rails have of late been introduced to these tables, and it must be owned that it is with good effect, as they take off the long appearance of the legs and make the under part appear more finished ; beside, they afford an opportunity of fixing a vase or basket of flowers, which, with their reflection when there is a glass behind, produce a brilliant appearance. Some, in place of a stretcher, have a thin marble shelf with a brass rim round it, supported by a light frame; in which case the top ought to be of marble also."

The Pembroke-table is still in favor, and differs little from the Pembroke made by Heppelwhite. "It is used," says Sheraton, "for a gentleman or lady to breakfast on. The style of finishing these tables is very neat, sometimes bordering upon elegance, being at times made of satin-wood, and having richly japanned borders round their tops with ornamental drawer fronts." Another variety, called the Harlequin Pembroke-table, supplied with ingenious machinery and containing a nest of drawers that could be raised any height, "serves," Sheraton informs us, "not only as a breakfast-table but also as a writing-table, very suitable for a lady."

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Sheraton was particularly happy in his designs for dainty furniture for ladies. The Ladies' Cabinet Dressing-Table, for instance, which appeared to be an ordinary *commode*, had on top a case or nest of drawers, innumerable little drawers fitted up with all the conveniences necessary for a lady's toilet, a cabinet in which she could keep her rings and other jewels, and glasses that folded in behind little doors in the most ingenious fashion. Under one of the drawers a slider was concealed, which could be drawn forward, when the fair owner wanted to write. A special drawer contained materials for writing. Work-tables also attracted his attention. Many of them were writing-desks as well, and contained an astonishing number of compartments arranged with great economy of space. His "French work-table" was generally made of satin-wood, with a brass moulding around the edge. In his "Pouch tables," made about 1803, a work-bag is attached to the frame which draws forward. "When required to be elegant," Sheraton remarks, "black rosewood is used; otherwise they may be very neat of mahogany." In some of them the top is a chess-board.

Shaving-stands and dressing-glasses for gentlemen were equally convenient and well planned. Like Heppelwhite, Sheraton makes great use of the tambour-shutter for his bason stands, night stands and dressing-tables.

"Tambour tables," he explains, "among cabinet-makers, are of two sorts — one for a lady or gentleman to write at; and another for the former to execute needlework by. The Writing Tambour Tables are almost out of use at present, being both insecure and liable to injury. They are called Tambour from the cylindrical forms of their tops, which are glued up in narrow strips of mahogany and laid upon canvas which binds them together, and suffers them, at the same time to yield to the motion their ends make in the

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PLATE CXIII

Mahogany Card-Table; Mahogany Writing-Desk; Mahogany Dumb-Waiter; Mahogany Spoon-Case and Knife-Boxes

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curved groove in which they run, so that the top may be brought round to the front, and pushed at pleasure to the back again when required to be open. Tambour tables are often introduced in small pieces of work when no great strength or security is required."

Of the Kidney library table Sheraton says: "This piece is termed a kidney-table on account of its resemblance to that intestine part of animal so called. The drawers are strong and cross-banded with mahogany laid up and down. The pilasters are panelled, or cross-banded, and the feet are turned." In France this shape is called *haricot*.

Sheraton gives a great many designs of tables that are appropriate for the breakfast-room and library. These include card-tables and what he calls the sofa-table.

The dining-table of Sheraton's time was oblong, round, or oval, and usually supported on the pillar-and-claw. It was of mahogany and was accompanied by mahogany chairs covered with leather.

The extension dining-table, with extra leaves, had not come into existence.

In 1797, among the furniture sold at Christie's, we note: "a large mahogany two-flap dining-table; a two-flap spider-leg table; and a mahogany oval dining-table."

In the middle of the Prince of Wales's dining-parlor in Carlton House stood a large range of dining-tables, standing on pillars with four claws each, which Sheraton adds, "is now the fashionable way of making these tables."

"The common useful dining-tables," Sheraton says, "are upon pillars and claws, generally four claws to each pillar, with brass casters. A dining-table of this kind may be made to any size by having a sufficient quantity of pillar and claw parts, for between each of these there is a loose flap, fixed by means of iron straps and buttons, so that

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they are easily taken off and put aside; and the beds may be joined to each other with brass fork or strap fastenings. The sizes of dining-tables," he continues, "for certain numbers may easily be calculated by allowing two feet to each person sitting at table; less than this cannot, with comfort, be dispensed with. A table, six feet by three, on a pillar and claws, will admit of eight persons, one only at each end, and three on each side."

Sheraton also designed a number of dumb-waiters, supplied with shelves, drawers, trays, and holes for decanters, and also a supper tray called a "Canterbury" that was "made to stand by a table at supper with a circular end and three partitions crosswise, to hold knives, forks and plates, at that end, which is made circular on purpose." This piece of furniture is said to have been invented by an Archbishop of Canterbury.

Another convenient form of table that Sheraton notes in his books is the group of small tables with very light frames. When not in use, these stood one within the other. They were known as quartette or trio tables; and another name was rout-tables, for they were used, like the rout-chairs "at routs and other entertainments."

It was not until the year 1800 that Richard Gillow of London invented and patented the telescope arrangement, which, with slight improvements, is still in use in the present day. Gillow's patent is described as "an improvement in the method of constructing dining and other tables calculated to reduce the number of legs, pillars and claws, and to facilitate and render easy, their enlargement and reduction."

During the Empire tables were made in the French modes. The drawing-room table was either round or oval and stood on four feet, decorated with lions' heads, chimæræ, or sphinxes, or the pillar-and-claw. It was sup-

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PLATE CXIV

Heppelwhite Pembroke Table and Empire Console-Table

Metropolitan Museum

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plied with a marble top, and on this stood a lamp with a shade. A table cloth was frequently used in England.

The console was a large square table much like that of the last days of Louis XVI. It was decorated more or less ornately with gilded bronze. Sometimes a mirror was placed at the back, which was framed by the legs; and sometimes the tops of the legs are carved into the form of sphinxes, or the heads of sphinxes, or other masks. (See Plate CXIV.)

The tea-table was very ornate; and the *jardinière*, or *table à fleurs*, was often vase-shaped and supported by sphinxes. It was by no means an exceptional adornment in a drawing-room or sitting-room.

Mr. John Stafford, an eminent upholsterer of Bath, who designed and made so much fashionable furniture of his day, was responsible for a flower stand that was described in Ackermann's *Repository* in 1819 as follows:

"The *jardinière* forms a proper ornament for such a situation, and is rendered particularly interesting by a font of gold and silver fish, and by a small aviary for choice singing birds: the style is French and the article similar in design to those executed in Paris under the direction of Mons. Percier, the architect."

In 1822, we read in the same publication accompanying a design: "The flower-stand forms an elegant piece of furniture in oak, with bronze ornaments, the top being calculated to receive large drooping plants and a lamp, or glass with gold fish; either way, as a whole, it is perfect in its form and will be found to add much to the beauty of a small entrance hall."

Receptacles for displaying flowers in the chief apartments of well-furnished dwellings are always in request, and they admit an infinite variety of form and decoration from the simplest *monopede* to the most magnificent assemblage of

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stages. The present design is suited to a drawing-room or boudoir, being executed in choice woods and *or moulu;* in which case the reservoir should be lined with thin milled lead, to contain water, over which a silver network should be placed in a rounding form, to support the flowers and display them to advantage: from the reservoir a pipe should be affixed, so that it may be readily emptied, otherwise the stagnant water and vegetable matter speedily become offensive for want of change.

"Flowers admirably harmonize with glass; and if in the present design all the receptacles were made in that material, beautifully cut in the splendid fashion now in use, the design would be very ornamental, and one in each corner of the drawing-room might be well displayed, particularly if constructed as a tripod. Many such articles of furniture have been executed lately by the Blades of Ludgate Hill."

In the inventories of prosperous and wealthy Americans and also in the advertisements of cabinet-makers and shop-keepers, we find innumerable notices of tables that show how closely fashions were followed on this side of the ocean with regard to this piece of furniture as well as every other form. For example, from the announcements of the years 1823–5, we gather the following:

Claw table stands; pillar-and-claw-foot breakfast-tables; card-tables; card and pier and Pembroke-tables to match with marble slabs; a pair polished card-tables; six cases elegant tops of centre tables, with landscape views in Rome, etc., painted in a superior style and lately imported from Italy; elegant pier-tables with marble pillars; pillar-and-claw-foot tables; two superb pier-tables, imitation rose-wood, very handsomely gilded, one centre table with marble slab; pier-tables with marble slabs and columns and Pembroke-tables.

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VI

MIRRORS. SCREENS. CLOCKS

The Mirror

UNTIL the Thirteenth Century, mirrors were made of burnished metal. The first looking-glasses with silvered backs were merely small mirrors destined to hang on a lady's *châtelaine*. In the Sixteenth Century, the art of silvering the back was brought to perfection in Murano; and not long after those celebrated glass-works were in operation, the French, Germans and English all stepped into the field, and began to make looking-glasses with more or less success. The French and English, however, achieved the best results in imitating the Venetian work. About the Sixteenth Century, glasses with beveled sides (*à biseau*) were made in Venice and frames became of great importance.

Sometimes they were very architectural and carved in the most ornate fashion. The handsome mirror on Plate CXV., from the Cluny Museum, is Italian work of the Sixteenth Century, and exhibits in its carving the fanciful ideas of the Renaissance. Here we have flowers, fruits, foliage and strange birds, as well as Cupids and other mythological figures. The two satyrs, one blowing a horn and the other a pipe, on the pediment, are finely sculptured. It is, however, all frame and very little mirror, as was the general treatment of the time. The whole frame is carved and gilt.

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A French authority tells us that "In Italy they were developed in redundant foliage, supporting figures of geniuses; or crowned with a pyramidal composition on which appeared the escutcheon of the owner; others were sculptured in hard wood, such as oak, the most perfect of these works being gilded on the bare wood with a species of bright gold called ducat gold; others were coated with that white paste which is still used and gilded on a light impression of vermilion.

"A great change took place under Louis XIV; Venice and its mirrors were left far behind; and after having vainly endeavored to bring over workmen from Murano to found a manufactory of glass in the faubourg St. Antoine, Colbert learned that one already existed in regular working order at Tourlaville near Cherbourg. The minister sent for Lucas de Nehou, the director, to take in hand the royal manufactory of glasses. Shortly after, he was able to send from it the splendid decorations of the *galerie des fêtes* for Versailles. Thenceforth, it could no longer be a question of counterbalancing the minute dimensions of the mirror by the development of its frame; the latter, therefore, underwent a transformation, and, like the borders of wainscotings, was reduced to delicate arabesque combinations connected by wreaths of flowers, relieved by masks and palmettes, or by shells and acanthus foliage. Notwithstanding the increased dimensions of the glasses their effect was still more heightened by inlaid pieces. Thus sections of glass were ranged at each corner of the principal sheet of glass, whether oval or rectangular, then pieces to form a border, and others forming a pediment at the top, and a pendant towards the base; gilded and carved wood united them all, hiding the joints by ingenious intersections, and furnishing the architectural framework with its chief designs, its stems and wreaths, its crowned masks, requisite

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PLATE CXV

Sixteenth Century Italian Mirror

Cluny Museum

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for consolidating the masses and giving points of attraction to the eye. These sculptures are of extreme elegance of composition and of great delicacy of workmanship."

Therefore, the mirror was now seen in every home and in every room. Several, indeed, were often hung in one room. One, of course, was placed over the chimney-piece, which was adorned with a handsome clock, on either side of which stood a gilt candelabrum of several arms. These, reflected into the glass, added brilliancy to the room, and were reflected back and forth by the pier-glasses between the windows.

In the bedrooms, of course, a mirror hung over the dressing-table, or stood upon it.

Two large looking-glasses, with green ebony frames, and two other large looking-glasses appear in the inventory of a wealthy lady of the period, who also possessed a table of "calembour[1] wood, which encloses a toilet of the same wood, ornamented with gold, containing two dressing-boxes and looking-glass, one pin cushion, one powder-box, and two brushes of the same."

The Duke of Buckingham started a factory in Lambeth about 1670, and sent for the best glass-makers, glass-grinders, and polishers from Venice, which, we are told, "succeeded so well as to be now enabled to send to that very place and to every other part of Europe, and to Asia, Africa and America, the finest glass of all sorts that the world can produce." In 1677 Evelyn notes of a visit to Lambeth: "We also saw the Duke of Buckingham's glass-works, where they made huge vases of metal as clear, ponderous and thick as crystal; also looking-glasses far larger and better than any that come from Venice."

The Vauxhall Plate Glass factory was in operation until

[1] Calembour, or eagle-wood, a sweet-scented species of aloes that comes from the East.

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1780. Charles II. forbade the importation of any kind of glass; and this, of course, gave a strong incentive to native talent. The secrets of manufacture were guarded, but glass was made in Vauxhall in much the same manner as in Murano. The largest plates measured four feet; and when a larger mirror was required, two or more pieces of glass were used. Small mirrors were also often made in two sections. Many of these Vauxhall mirrors were exported to America.

At first the frames were of ebony, olive-wood and walnut; at the end of the Seventeenth Century lacquered frames were popular and soft wood carved and gilded, or a composition of something like plaster of Paris, moulded and gilt.

About the time of the Restoration, decorative frames were made. At first they were architectural in character; but later they became simpler and were often but a narrow margin or "list" of walnut, or ebony, or wood stained black to represent ebony. The glass was usually beveled and the outline of the bevel followed the curves of the inner frame. The Vauxhall plates were small; and, therefore, the mirrors were often in two pieces, the larger one at the base and the smaller one, forming a sort of panel, at the top. The upper panel was finished with a dull surface, and figures and patterns were cut in the back of the glass, producing an effect like that of embossed work or gem-cutting. Sometimes two or three plates were framed together and the joints hidden by bands of gilded wood, or metal, like the outside frame, or by strips of colored glass.

The great carver, Grinling Gibbons, made a number of exquisite mirror-frames with beautifully executed flowers and fruits; but the richly carved frame of his style soon changed for that of Louis XIV. French mirrors were

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now imported into England. Many Huguenot refugee workmen now made frames in England in the French style and after designs of Marot. Instead of the great wreath of flowers and fruits, the decoration motives were heavy garlands of the bell-flower, the scroll, the mascaron and the urn.

When the Dutch styles came in with William and Mary the mirror frames were often inlaid with colored woods in the new taste.

A Queen Anne mirror, oblong in shape, with elegantly carved gilt frame, the design being foliage and gadrooning, was recently sold in London for £26; and one of the William III. period in English marquetry frame, with flowers and foliage, beautifully inlaid in colored woods and ivory on a walnut ground, for £43.

The mirror was equally if not still more important in the days of Louis XV. The frames are most ornate for pier-glasses, smaller mirrors and sconce arms which often encircle or spring from the frame of a looking-glass. The decorators of the day give many designs in which the curve is exhibited in every possible contortion. There are leafy scrolls, *chûtes* of leaves and husks, shells, mascarons, flowery branches, crawling dragons, serpents, monkeys and mythological figures that are more and more fantastically treated until the styles change again.

Chippendale, being a carver, naturally delighted in designing frames for pictures and mirrors. In his day the tall pier-glasses between the windows were as important as the mantel-glass, and were frequently carved to correspond. Moreover, the girandoles that carried the side lights for the drawing-room and dining-room and which were hung on either side of the mantel-piece, were also furnished with a looking-glass, not only for ornament, but for the purpose of reflecting the lights of the candles and

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rendering the room more brilliant. Chippendale's frames naturally show him when he is perhaps in his most characteristic moods. They bristle with spiky leaves in which long-tailed, long-beaked birds peck at scrolls, leaves, and icicles, and sometimes squawk at mandarins standing under pagodas. Subjects from mythology and Æsop's Fables are blended with Chinese motives or the fantastic scroll and leaf-work of the Louis XV. Style which Chippendale used so beautifully. He was very clever — as clever as the French designers — in making the sconce-arms emerge from the leaves or scrolls in natural and graceful sweeps.

The Chippendale mirrors are frequently in several divisions; but the union of the separate plates is always hidden under the foliage or the rock and shell-work. Chippendale mirrors now bring large prices. Within the past five years the following sums have been realized in London:

A Chippendale gilt mirror, with three lights, 5 feet, 6 inches high and 4 feet wide, scroll frame with floral border, £89; a pair of Chippendale girandole mirrors, 4 feet, 5 inches high, 1 foot, 5 inches wide, gilt and carved in Gothic design, £27; a pair of Chippendale mirrors, 8 feet long, 3 feet, 6 inches wide, with Vauxhall plates in two divisions, scroll and floral carved frame, surmounted with masks, £79; a Chippendale mirror, carved and gilt, 7 feet, four inches long, 4 feet, 2 inches wide, 90 guineas; a Chippendale bevel-edged mirror, 7 feet high, 3 feet wide, upright black frame with festoons of flowers, foliage, rosettes, acorns, and arabesques in relief, 38 guineas.

Cornices were also carved in sympathy with the mirrors, and other furniture and wood-work of the room. In the bedrooms the window-curtains matched those of the bed.

The American colonists always kept up with the latest fashions in England. In the wealthy houses of both North and South the newest styles in silver and furniture were al-

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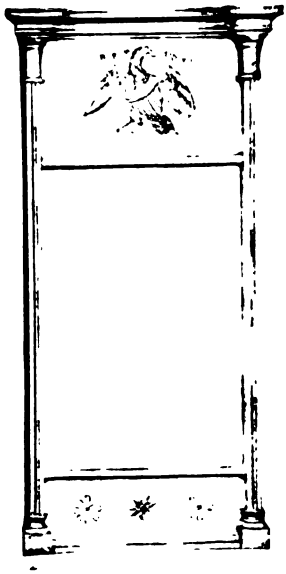


PLATE CXVI

Chippendale Gilt Mirror Frames; Chippendale Walnut and Gilt Mirror Frame

American Gilt Frame Mirror (1800–1825)

Metropolitan Museum

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ways to be seen. In the early days when mirrors came into use in England, the landed proprietors here had them also. The old inventories are full of entries of looking-glasses with olive-wood frames, looking-glasses with black lists, etc., etc.; and as the years go on and fashions change, the items in the wills and inventories show that the rich householders constantly bought the newest and the latest articles in furniture. Even if this were not the case, the many advertisements in the current newspapers of importations from London and the many cards from carvers and gilders and looking-glass makers who offer to remodel old glasses, cutting them into the correct shapes and sizes and framing them in the newest styles, show that there was a great demand for such work. A glance through the old New York newspapers shows the following facts:



CORNICE FOR WINDOW-DRAPERY, BY ADAM

In 1730 "James Foddy, Citizen and Glass-seller of London, who arrived here at the end of last June and brought with him a parcel of very fine looking-glasses of all sorts," acquainted the public that he "undertook to alter and amend old looking-glasses."

In 1735 Mr. Duyckinck, at the Sign of the Two Cupids, near the Old Slip Market, had new looking-glasses and frames plain japanned or flowered.

Towards the middle of the Eighteenth Century chimney-glasses with carved walnut or gilt frames, valued at from thirty to eighty pounds, were not uncommon in rich New England houses. They were often supplied with arms for candles. A gilt-edged walnut frame in 1748 is valued at 120 pounds, and another with walnut frame and brass arms at 37 pounds, 10 shillings. All through the last three-

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quarters of the Eighteenth Century mahogany was used for frames, and also pine-wood stained to resemble mahogany. Walnut and gilded wood was a very popular combination and the carved and gilded frame always held its own.

Among the items advertised by various merchants we see gilt and plain looking-glasses of sundry sizes, in 1745; japanned dressing-glasses, in 1748; new fashion sconces and looking-glasses, in 1749; looking-glass sconces, in 1750; sconces and pier-glasses of all sizes, in 1752; an assortment of sconces, gilt and carved in the newest fashions, in 1753; newest fashioned looking-glasses from London, in 1757; a variety of sconces with branches in walnut frames with gilt edges, in 1757; looking-glasses framed in the newest taste, £8 to £30 apiece, in 1761; looking-glasses from 2 to 6 feet, in 1764; convex and concave mirrors, in 1764; two carved white-framed sconce glasses, in 1764; handsome pier-glass and two sconces with gilt frame, in 1768; large pier-glass in an elegant carved frame, in 1769; painted frame looking-glasses, in 1773; and also in that year oval glasses, pier-glasses and sconces in burnished gold, glass bordered and mahogany and black walnut frames, with gilt ornaments of all sizes.

In 1769 Minshall, a carver and gilder from London, settled in Dock Street and had carved frames for glasses; and by the end of the century he had built up a big business in this special line. In 1775 Minshall's Looking-glass Store in Hanover Square, opposite Mr. Goelet's Sign of the Golden Key, advertised "an elegant assortment of looking-glasses, in oval and square ornamental frames; ditto mahogany. Also an elegant assortment of frames without glass. Any Lady or Gentleman that has glass in old fashioned frames may have them cut to ovals, or put in any pat-

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tern that pleases them best. The above frames may be finished white, or green and white, purple, or any other color that suits the furniture of the room, or gilt in oil, or burnished gold equal to the best imported."

The mirrors designed by the Adam brothers are light, graceful and charming, and Heppelwhite's are no less so. The oval mirror now becomes of great importance, and also the mirror with sconce-arms which Heppelwhite calls "girandole."

Heppelwhite was fond of the oval mirror with the light falling bell-flower used as a festoon, often looped from a little bracket on which stood a small urn. Pier-glass frames were usually square, of good carved work, gilt and burnished. Heppelwhite says that "they should be made nearly to fill the pier. They must be fixed very low, and the panels of the sides are frequently made of various colored glass."

"Girandoles," Heppelwhite says, "admit of great variety in pattern and elegance; they are usually executed of the best carved work — gilt and burnished in parts. They may be carved and colored suitable to the room."

The concave and convex mirror with gilt frames and branches for candles became very popular in Sheraton's day and they lasted for many decades. Such mirrors were frequently framed in black, ornamented with gilt balls, and surmounted by a gilt eagle. Many of these are preserved in old American homes.

Another style in great favor was the long mirror. Sheraton says:

"Glasses for chimney-pieces run various, according to the size of the fireplace and the height of the wall above. To save expense, they are sometimes fitted up in three plates and the joints of the glass covered with small gilt mouldings or plasters. At other times with the naked

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joint only. When they are of one plate, the frame in general is made bolder and more elegant."

Sheraton also says:

"In elegant rooms the chimney-glass is usually carried to the under side of the cornice of the ceiling; but to reduce the expense of the plate, sometimes a broadish panel is introduced at the top of the glass with a frieze and cornice above all, included in the frame of the glass."

"The most generally approved pilasters for chimney and pier-glasses are those of 3, 5, or 7 reeds worked bold; but which, in my opinion, still look better by being parted with a ground one-third of the width of the reed, which may be matted to relieve the burnished reeds. It is not unusual to have a twisting branch of flowers, or a ribband round the reeds rising upwards and terminating in some sort of Composite, Corinthian or Ionic capital. The panel above the glass is sometimes made quite plain and covered with silk as a ground for drapery, tacked under the corner of the glass to match that of the windows."

Looking-glasses in gilt, mahogany and walnut frames (1801); elegant gilt frames with pillars, balls, enamelled frieze and eagle tops all sizes, mahogany frames of all kinds, gilt and plain, made in the most fashionable manner, walnut and satin-wood frames, nutwood, enamelled and elegant gilt, the plates 70 by 50 inches (1803); German looking-glasses (1810); looking-glass, square pediment and double columns, and one, ditto, with eagle on top (1811); convex mirrors handsomely ornamented from London (1811); dressing-glasses and convex mirrors from 12 to 24 inches in diameter, ornamented in a most superb manner with six lights (1812); rich gilt frame pier and match mirrors (1823); rich mantel glass, cost $1,600 (1823), and convex mirrors (1823).

The mirror as a part of the dressing-table is comparatively

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PLATE CXVII

Louis XIV. Screen, Gilt Frame and Tapestry
Cluny Museum

Louis XV. Screen, Gilt Frame and Tapestry; Pole-Screen, Mahogany and Needlework
Metropolitan Museum

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modern. In the Sixteenth Century, and before, the dressing-table was merely a simple table covered with a cloth, and over it spread a white linen or lace "toilette." Upon it, or above it, hung a mirror the frame of which was carved and gilt, or olive-wood or ebony or wood stained black to represent ebony; or, in wealthy homes, of solid silver.

In the middle of the Eighteenth Century the little oval, shield-shaped, or square glass that stood upon one or two drawers, was a separate piece of furniture and was placed on a chest of drawers or shaving-stand. Sheraton and Heppelwhite frequently added looking-glasses to their dressing-tables and shaving-stands, but usually connected them in drawers with mechanism that allowed them to be elevated or hidden at pleasure. In the Empire period the mirror often formed a part of the dressing-table and the *cheval,* or glass on a horse frame, also became popular.

The Screen

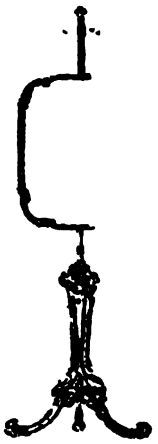
Screens are of three kinds: the folding-screen composed of two, three, or more leaves; the screen on a horse frame; and the pole-screen supported on a rod. The folding-screen is found in every country, with a more or less decorated frame, covered with leather, tapestry, silk, velvet damask, and even paper.

In the days of Louis XIV. the *paravent,* or folding-screen, and the *écran,* or horse-screen, were in every room. The material was usually tacked to the frame with large gilt-headed nails, as in the handsome example from the Cluny Museum represented on Plate CXVII. This belongs to the period of Louis XIV. The wood-work is gilded, and the covering of *petit point* tapestry, reminding us of the Marot designs. On the same plate a screen of the next period is also represented. This is also of carved and gilded

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wood framing a piece of tapestry, the subject of which is taken from Æsop's Fables. It represents the Wolf and the Lamb surrounded by flowers and shell-work on a dark brown ground. In general form, the frame resembles the favorite chair-backs of the day.

In Chippendale's book we find that the screens standing on four legs are called "horse fire-screens." Some of them fold and others slide up and down in a groove. Chippendale also made pole-screens. Pole-screens were also a favorite (see Plate CXVII.).



POLE-SCREEN, BY CHIPPENDALE

Heppelwhite's horse fire-screen "is supported by uprights standing on feet, and the screen slides up and down in grooves in these uprights." The framework is usually mahogany, and the screen of green silk or needlework.

Heppelwhite's "Pole fire-screen" is made of mahogany or japanned wood, and "may be ornamented variously with maps, Chinese figures, needlework, etc. The screen is suspended on the pole by means of a spring in the eye through which the pole goes." The two outer feet were often loaded with lead to keep them steady.

Sheraton has similar pole-screens; and he also gives designs for Tripod Fire-Screens, to be made in white and gold, mahogany or japanned. Sheraton says:

"The rods of these screens are all supposed to have a hole through them and a pulley let in near the top, on which the line passes, and a weight being enclosed in the tassel, the screen is balanced to any height. The rods are often made square, which, indeed, best suits those which have pulleys, while those that are made round, have only

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PLATE CXVIII
Chippendale Clock

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rings and springs. Such screens as have very fine prints, commonly have a glass before them. In which case a frame is made with a rabbet to receive the glass and another to receive the straining-frame, to prevent it from breaking the glass; and to enclose the straining-frame a bead is mitred round."

The Clock

In the history of modern furniture the clock is of little interest until the pendulum clock, constructed by Huygens and described by him in 1658, was introduced. Then the long pendulum was enclosed in the tall pedestal-shaped box, and it quickly found favor everywhere.

Boulle and his sons, for instance, made many clock-cases, and of two kinds: clocks that were destined to stand on the chimney-piece or on brackets and long case clocks. The latter — about six feet high — wonderful creations of marquetry cabinet-work and bronze ornamentation.

Marot was another who designed clocks. Tall clocks, long case clocks, and clocks that stand on brackets and pedestals or terms appear in his books. Many of Marot's clocks, indeed, standing on pedestals or terms, appear at first glance as long case clocks; but close standing shows a break between the base of the clock and the top of the pedestal.

A clock and pedestal in the Wallace Museum (see Plate CXIX.) is a fine example of the decorative art of the transition period of Louis XIV. to the Regency. It is marquetry of metal on tortoise-shell, the frame, works and ornaments cast and chased in the Boulle *atelier*. The subject of the medallion on the pedestal is Hercules taking the world on his shoulders while Atlas goes to get the golden apples of the Hesperides.

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In the Wallace Collection there is also a handsome clock and cabinet or vitrine in various woods, with groups and mounts of gilt bronze, cast and chased, and signed *Hervé à Paris*. It is a fine example of the style of the Regency. On either side of the clock are groups of a boar and a stag being worried by dogs; and above it sits Diana patting a hound, while Cupid tries to deprive her of her spear.

During the first half of the Eighteenth Century there was quite a rage for japanned cases. The decorations were, of course, Oriental designs similar to those on the high case of drawers on Plate XXIV. A very handsome clock of this kind is preserved in the Boston Museum of Art.

Mahogany cases in the Chippendale Style were in great favor. The one represented on Plate CXVIII. is 8 feet, 3 inches high and 2 feet, 1 inch wide. The case is ornamented with carved lattice-work and boldly pierced columns at the corners, supporting a frieze of lattice-work and arches above which is a small toothed cornice. The face is enclosed in a band of carved lattice-work with arched top, and with pierced tapering square-shaped columns at the angles, supporting a scroll-shaped lattice and dental pediment terminating in rosettes, with low plinth in the centre and a metal gilt ball with steeple top at each side. The base has a square panel bordered by a broad band of lattice-work, and carved with broken masonry at the angles in relief.

In Sheraton's first book he gives a number of designs for tall clock-cases "painted and japanned," but in 1803 he says that he has given no design of the tall clock-case as "these pieces are almost obsolete in London," but intends to do so in his large work "to serve my country friends."

Regarding the more fashionable bracket he writes:

"Clock-brackets are used to place small time pieces upon, when there is no other convenient place; but in good

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